LIBRARY OF PRINCETON

OCT 31 1994

THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

BV
2848
.J3
K56
1849

MEMOIR OF WILLIAM KNIBB.

[illegible]

Yours very affy

William Knibb

[illegible]

MEMOIR

OF

WILLIAM KNIBB,

Missionary in Jamaica.

BY JOHN HOWARD HINTON, M.A.

SECOND EDITION.

LONDON:
PUBLISHED BY HOULSTON AND STONEMAN,
PATERNOSTER ROW.
BRISTOL: EVANS AND ABBOTT, CLARE STREET.
M.DCCC.XLIX.

LONDON:

J. HADDON, PRINTER, CASTLE STREET, FINSBURY.

PREFACE.

THAT William Knibb's Life should be written was demanded by the public; that I should be the writer of it was requested by his family and friends. Their wishes were in the first instance, indeed, directed to his beloved brother and successor in the pastoral charge, Mr. ABBOTT, and it is to be regretted that one so long and so intimately acquainted with him, and with the sphere of his labours, should have found it necessary to decline the task. For myself, I confess that I was not unwilling to accept a call, which would at all events place me in honourable and lasting conjunction with one whom I highly revered, and which might supply to me an opportunity of performing an important service to the cause of Christ. How far I have realized this hope it will be for others to decide. Whatever may be pronounced to be my deficiencies, I will plead nothing in extenuation but the simple and to some extent available fact, that I have never been in Jamaica, and have consequently no personal knowledge of the scene in which the subject of this Memoir lived and laboured. This has undoubtedly been to me a great disadvantage; but having contended with it as well as I could, I must now leave the reader also to bear its consequences as he may.

I have written almost entirely from documents. Many of these are in print, but by far the larger proportion of them are in manuscript, and consist of letters to various persons. In relation to these documents I must in candour inform the reader of two things: first, that I have inserted few of them at full length, but have rather selected such portions as were suitable to my purpose; secondly, that I have not in any case made a point of adhering to literal accuracy. The composition of Knibb's letters and speeches, I have found in some instances so loose as to require considerable freedoms; and I have taken them. I hope that by judicious persons who may take the trouble of comparison, I shall not be thought to have used improper licence.

So many portraits of Knibb have appeared, and so little novelty seemed possible in any further attempt, that I at first determined to publish this volume without one. Pressed, however, with the importance of this adjunct to a biographical sketch, and favoured by my friend, Mr. HADDON, with the use of a daguerreotype as yet unengraved, I resolved to prefix to this Memoir as perfect and finished a resemblance of it as could be procured. Mr. COCHRAN has elaborately executed the plate, and I am not without hope that I shall have succeeded in presenting to the public a more striking and characteristic likeness of Knibb than has yet appeared. He sat for it during his last visit to England, and but a few months before his death.

With a view to afford the reader further gratification, I have placed as a vignette on the title-page, a view of the house at Kettering, Jamaica, which was presented to him by his flock, and in which he died.

The friends who have aided me in this work, although they have not been numerous, have been very kind, and on the conclusion of it I return them my sincere thanks. That many more facts may be collected than I have yet become acquainted with I have not the least doubt; and should any persons make communications of this class to me, I shall be but too happy to incorporate them in any future edition.

Nothing now remains for me but to request a kind acceptance of this volume from the public, in whose eyes the subject of it has occupied so large a space; from the committee and members of the Baptist Missionary Society, in whose service he so long and so efficiently laboured; from the black population of Jamaica, whom his unquenchable benevolence inspired with such intense affection, and from among whom his ardent piety attracted so many to the cross; and above all, from that weeping family circle who have had the happiness of moving round such a centre, and the honour of looking up to such a head.

London, February 5th, 1847.

ADVERTISEMENT

TO THE SECOND EDITION.

It would have afforded me pleasure, if the state of trade had presented sufficient encouragement, to put forth at an earlier period a second and a less expensive edition of this Memoir. That it possesses a deep interest for many who have not been able to acquire it in its first form, is beyond doubt; and I am happy to be at length warranted in presenting it to the public at half its original price.

The Memoir is altogether without abridgment. That it should be open to some corrections was inevitable, and not to have improved the opportunity of making them, would have been unpardonable. The only one, however, requiring specific notice occurs in page 337, where the name of Theodore Hook is inserted, instead of that of Thomas Hood, as editor of the John Bull newspaper. For this unintentional injury to the reputation of Mr. Hood, I here express my sincere regret.

London, February 6, 1849.

CONTENTS.

CHAPTER I.

PAGE.
His early life, to the sailing of his brother Thomas for Jamaica 1

CHAPTER II.

His early life, from the sailing of his brother Thomas to Jamaica to his death 13

CHAPTER III.

From his brother's death to his own arrival in Jamaica . . 23

CHAPTER IV.

His public life in Kingston 45

CHAPTER V.

His private life at Kingston 74

CHAPTER VI.

Revival of hostility to missions in Jamaica 86

CHAPTER VII.

From his settlement at Savanna-la-Mar to his removal to Falmouth 99

CHAPTER VIII.

From his settlement at Falmouth to the insurrection . . . 104

CHAPTER IX.

The insurrection 111

CHAPTER X.

PAGE.
From his arrival in England in June, 1832, to his return to Jamaica, in August, 1834 140

CHAPTER XI.

The state of the church at Falmouth from the insurrection until his return in 1834 187

CHAPTER XII.

From his return to Jamaica in 1834, to the era of freedom . 194

CHAPTER XIII.

From the era of freedom to his second voyage to England, in 1840 260

CHAPTER XIV.

His second visit to England 342

CHAPTER XV.

From his arrival in Jamaica in January, 1841, to his third visit to England 393

CHAPTER XVI.

His third visit to England 415

CHAPTER XVII.

His labours in Jamaica from 1842 to 1845 448

CHAPTER XVIII.

His fourth visit to England 478

CHAPTER XIX.

From his return to Jamaica to his death 511

CHAPTER XX.

Estimate of his character and labours 526

MEMOIR.

CHAPTER I.

HIS EARLY LIFE, TO THE SAILING OF HIS BROTHER THOMAS FOR JAMAICA.

William Knibb, the subject of the present memoir, was the son of Thomas and Mary Knibb, of Kettering, in Northamptonshire. His father was a tradesman in that town, and not a professor of religion. His mother, whose maiden name was Dexter, was a member of the independent church in Kettering, then under the pastoral care of the late Mr. Toller. I am happy to be able to present to the reader the following brief portraiture of this admirable woman, from the pen of his son and successor. "I was well acquainted," says Mr. Toller, "with Mrs. Knibb; and I think her character, mental and moral, contributed in no small degree, under God, to prepare her sons for the distinction to which they afterwards rose. There was that about her which would at once excite love and reverence. Her piety was not only above the common rate, but it was highly intelligent and attractive. She passed most of her life in most trying circumstances, under which she uniformly displayed a magnanimity and quiet cheerfulness, that could not fail to be observed and admired by her children even at an early age. With much calmness of temper she combined great energy in all her undertakings; and there was a strength of intellect, a breadth and depth in her views on all subjects, religious and others, and a certain mild eloquence and felicity of language, and benignity of manner, which at the same time inspired respect for her understanding, and affection to her person."

Mr. and Mrs. Knibb had eight children, of whom William, who entered into the world together with a twin sister, whose name was Ann, was the fifth. He was born on the 7th[*] of September, 1803. He received the first rudiments of learning at a dame-school, from which he was in due time removed to the town grammar-school, then conducted by Mr. Hogg, necessarily a clergyman of the church of England. Three years spent at this school completed his education. He was not remarkable for application, but he was quick and clever at his lessons, so that, without making any remarkable attainments, except in arithmetic, in which he took precedence of all his schoolfellows, he was never in disgrace. As a lad of great vivacity and good nature, he was a high favourite among his companions; and, although he bore away the palm in almost every pastime, his popularity was never brought into peril by any other circumstance than his uniform success at marbles. He was passionately fond of this game. The money which he won at it he systematically spent in the purchase of the *Youth's Magazine*. The following anecdote, although trifling, illustrates the promptness and energy which were so eminently characteristic of him. On one occasion, all his spare time having apparently been spent at his favourite game, his mother said to him, "William, I am afraid you have not learned your catechism for the sabbath." "O yes, I have, mother," he replied; "it rained the other day, and I could not play, so I went up an entry, and learned it there." At about seven years of age, namely, on the 30th of September, 1810, he was admitted into the Sunday-school connected with Mr. Toller's congregation, together with his two brothers, Thomas and Christopher, of the former of whom some further notice will be taken presently. Mr. Gill, then his teacher, and still a resident at Kettering, describes him as a good boy, but somewhat volatile, and very difficult to manage until his affections had been gained. He quickly took the part of any boy he thought injured, and maintained these generous quarrels with great resoluteness—it may be said, with pugnacity. He remained in the Sunday-school, acquitting himself with great credit, until 1816; when, having completed his thirteenth year, he was, according to an entry still extant in the records of the institution, dismissed as "too old" to receive further instruction in it. A surviving sister, who was intimately associated with him from infancy, gives the following sketch of him as a child:—"The chief traits of his early character were warm affection, unbounded generosity, management and economy, accompanied with great vivacity." Mr. Fuller, to whom he was afterwards apprenticed, thus speaks of him at an age somewhat more advanced: —"My first acquaintance with him was when he was quite a boy, only twelve or thirteen years of age; but even at that time a leading feature of his future life—a resolute, firm, unbending pursuit of everything he undertook—was strongly developed."

---

[*] I give this date on the authority of his own letters. I am aware that Mrs. Lea, his twin sister, names the 6th of September as the day of their birth, and I do not know how this discrepancy is to be removed.

It is now necessary to take some notice of Thomas Knibb, an elder brother of William, whose name has already been mentioned. He was born on the 11th of October, 1799, and was the eldest of the family. He was admitted into the Sunday-school at Kettering on the same day with his brother, being then about eleven years of age, and he left it at Christmas, 1812. The character he developed was in some respects in marked contrast with William's. With equal energy and affection, he had less vivacity, and, it may be said, no volatility. He seized on learning with avidity, and made rapid progress. Mr. Gill, in whose class he also was, represents him as an extraordinary youth; and the two anecdotes which follow will sustain this idea of him. On the first sabbath of his attendance at the school, a bible was given to one of the scholars as a prize. It was the first which had ever been given, and it fired the ambition of Thomas Knibb. "Mother," said he, on his return home, "you shall soon hear that I have got the second." Without the knowledge of the family, he purchased a candle, and rose at four every morning in order to gain his point, in which it is scarcely necessary to say he succeeded. The next incident is related by Mr. Gill in illustration of his power of memory, which may be truly said, if this were a sample of it, to have been prodigious. "I once offered sixpence," says Mr. Gill, "to the boy who should get me the greatest number of questions in one week, and repeat them correctly. Several of the boys acquitted themselves well, but Thomas beat them all; in fact, he did more than all the others put together. He repeated the whole of Dr. Watts's first, second, and third Catechisms, with proofs; the Assembly's, and its proofs; the whole of the Epistle of James; the first four chapters of Proverbs, with several Psalms; and, although I kept at it till nearly nine o'clock in the evening, he did not finish; so that I dismissed him with the sixpence, and my hearty commendation."

The strong recommendation of his teacher obtained for Thomas Knibb a situation in the printing establishment of Mr. J. G. Fuller, son of the Rev. Andrew Fuller, then pastor of the baptist church in Kettering, and secretary to the Baptist Missionary Society. In 1816 this gentleman removed his business to Bristol, and he took William with Thomas to that city, on his earnest request that he might be permitted to accompany his brother.

Thomas Knibb was from his childhood the subject of religious impressions, resulting from the instructions and example of his mother. During his residence at Bristol his character became decided; and he was baptized by Dr. Ryland, and admitted into the church at Broadmead, on the 10th of February, 1820. Both the brothers became teachers in the Sunday-school, and this was to William the birthplace of his soul. Of the exercises of his mind in the effectuation of the all-important change, the earliest record appears in some letters to his mother, from which I take the following extracts:—

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Bristol, November* 26, 1821.

"For a considerable time past my mind has been much exercised on the concerns of an eternal world. These convictions were, I believe, first received in connexion with Broadmead Sunday-school, and were afterwards much strengthened by your last kind letter, and a sermon preached by the Rev. Mr. Crisp, our minister, from

'Cut it down, why cumbereth it the ground?' I trust that I have been led to see my need of a Saviour, just such a one as the gospel reveals. I have sinned against much light and knowledge, and my sins are such as must plunge me into everlasting misery, were it not for that faithful saying which is indeed worthy of universal acceptation, that Christ came into this world to save sinners. Yes; were it not for this, I must sink into everlasting despair. But, blessed be his name, he is both able and willing to save the guiltiest sinner, who comes unto him with sincerity, pleading for mercy through his obedience and death. I see more and more, every day I live, that without the influences of his Holy Spirit I can perform nothing good; all my righteousness, before the scrutinizing eye of Omnipotence, must appear as filthy rags. I have in me a heart prone to depart from the living God, a heart in love with sin, and easily led away by the transitory pleasures of time and sense, which perish with the touch, and leave the possessor of them miserably poor. I trust that I can look up to the blessed Spirit of all grace, for strength to enable me to persevere in the Christian course. O that I may continually receive out of His fulness, 'and grace for grace!' O my dear mother, I hope that I do feel some of the pleasures of religion; that I do see that it is no cunningly-devised fable, that it is the only thing worth living for; but how little do I feel and enjoy to what I might, were I to live more to God's honour and glory, were I to be oftener at a throne of grace, to be more humble and watchful against the sins of pride and unbelief. Pride is mixed with all I do; it enters into the most solemn and secret duties that I perform. Strange indeed is it that those can be proud, who were lost and sunk so low that nothing but infinite love, compassion, and mercy, could rescue them from impending destruction.

"I have for some time past entertained thoughts of joining myself to a Christian community. O that I may duly count the cost, and that I may not rush heedlessly into one of the most serious duties of the Christian!"

TO THE SAME.

"*Bristol, January*, 1822.

"I have this day taken a decided step towards joining a Christian church, by visiting our ministers, Dr. Ryland and Mr. Crisp. Contrary to my expectation, they expressed themselves very well satisfied with what I related, and gave me much affectionate counsel. I trust that I have been enabled to act as in the sight of God, and that I have not studied to please men, knowing that it is of very little account what opinion they form of me; the grand concern ought to be, and I trust is, Are you right in the sight of God? I expect that I shall be proposed this evening. O may my constant and earnest prayer be, that I may be an ornament to my profession, that I may, at least by a holy life and conversation, recommend the gospel of Jesus Christ! O my dear mother, it is an important duty in which I am about to engage; I feel it to be so. But I trust that I do not enter on it in my own strength, but leaning on Him who has promised never to leave those who put their trust in him. It is also a duty to which very high privileges are attached, such as the Lord's supper, &c. I long for the time when unworthy I shall be permitted to sit and partake of the elements of His body which was broken for us."

His religious experience is more methodically developed in the paper which was read to the church at Broadmead on the occasion of his reception, and a portion of which I insert below:—

"Having enjoyed the unspeakable advantages of a religious education, and of being trained under the care of a pious and affectionate mother, I was early taught my state as a sinner, and the necessity of flying to Jesus Christ as the only hope of escape from that punishment which my sins had deserved, and I was at an early age subject to many convictions. And, though separated from under the immediate care of my parents at a very early age, yet the pious letters which I received from my mother from time to time, together with being placed in a serious family, were continual restraints upon my conduct, and tended continually to revive those convictions which I had received under the parental roof. Under these convictions the state of my mind was various. Often did I treat them as intruders upon my peace and comfort, and foolishly envied the condition of those of my associates who, I thought, could continue in their sins without being so often disturbed by those cutting reflections which I so frequently felt. At other times I endeavoured to lull my conscience asleep, under the delusion that I was willing to return to God if he would be pleased to change my heart, and that therefore it was not my fault. I impiously dared to charge it on my Maker. And not unfrequently did I make many resolutions of amendment, and many promises that, if the Lord would be pleased to pardon my sins, I would devote my future life to his service, and attend to those things which concerned my everlasting welfare. But these resolutions and promises were formed in my own strength, and I soon found, by sad experience, that they were of no avail in the hour of temptation; for no sooner did Satan present his allurements than I fell an easy prey to them, and returned to my old courses with as great an eagerness as ever. Indeed, under these convictions I have reason to believe that it was not sin as committed against a holy, just, and good God that affected me, so much as the consequences which I knew would inevitably result from continuing in it. I did not wish to be saved *from* my sins, but *in* them; and if I could have continued in sin and escaped the consequences, I am afraid that I should still have been willing to have rolled it as a sweet morsel under my tongue.

"A little less than a year ago I was invited to take one of the junior classes in the Broadmead Sunday-school. Before I had continued any length of time in the school, the thought struck my mind that I could not properly discharge the duties of my office if I did not devote a portion of my time to preparation for religious instruction. When I made the trial, such thoughts as these entered my mind, and almost induced me to abandon the attempt:—Have you attended to these things which you recommend to the children? You tell them they are of infinite importance, but do you really value them? If not, are you not, while instructing them, pronouncing your own condemnation? And how can you expect any blessing to result from your instructions? Some time after this a most earnest and affectionate address which was delivered to the children by the superintendent, from the character of young Abijah, under the divine blessing, made a deep and I trust lasting impression on my mind, and I hope that I was enabled to cast myself at the foot of the cross as a perishing sinner, pleading for mercy for the alone sake of Jesus Christ."

The address thus referred to was delivered by Mr. Fuller, and was founded on Jeremiah iii. 4—"Wilt thou not from this time cry unto me, My Father, thou art the guide of my youth?" Mr. Fuller thus states from memory the terms in which William Knibb subsequently expressed himself in relation to its impression upon him. "I felt ashamed, being a teacher, that the address should be as suitable to me as to the children. I felt conscious that I had wandered as far from God as ever they had, and that I needed a forgiving Father and a constant guide as much as they did. I felt overwhelmed at the astonishing condescension and love displayed in such an appeal. I felt, in fact, as I had never felt before, and as I cannot well describe—such a mixture of shame and grief, of hope and love. I could not join in the singing afterwards, though my heart went with the words. On leaving the school I went alone, and yielded to my feelings. I wept bitterly, and prayed earnestly, more earnestly than I had ever prayed before. I turned the text itself into prayer, and cried fervently to God, 'My Father, wilt thou from this time be the guide of *my* youth?' The Lord heard my prayer, and enabled me to give him my heart; and now it is my earnest desire to yield myself to his guidance as long as I live."

From his letter to the church I extract further the few words in which he states his views on the ordinance of baptism. They are as follows:—"I do not embrace the doctrine of believers' baptism from any idea that it possesses any intrinsic value, but from its being an ordinance appointed by Christ as emblematical of his death and resurrection, as well as of that change which takes place in regeneration. And as it was enjoined on the followers of Christ, and on them only, I believe that it ought not to be administered to any except those who profess repentance towards God, and faith towards our Lord Jesus Christ. From this consideration I cannot consider the baptism which I received in infancy as valid."

He was baptized by Dr. Ryland on the 7th of March, 1822. Persons who were present on that occasion speak of it as peculiarly solemn and impressive, and recollect especially the words addressed by the venerable administrator of the ordinance to the ruddy youth who was descending the steps to receive it at his hands—"Thou, therefore, endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ." It is at the option of the reader to regard the use of this language, now that the light of events has been thrown upon it, as *almost* prophetic.

In the address which Thomas Knibb delivered on his designation to Jamaica, in 1822, he gives the following account of the origin of his impulse towards missionary labour:—

> "My desires after missionary labour existed at rather an early period. In the year 1814 I was engaged with Mr. Fuller as a probationer for the printing business. We were then printing a number of the Periodical Accounts; and a letter written by Mr. Robinson, which was given me to compose, was the first means of creating desire in my mind after missionary exertion. One sentence, I remember, struck my mind very particularly, wherein Mr. R., speaking of the pleasing prospect of success, desired that he might go to heaven from Java. I thought that, however Christians were separated during the short time allotted to human life, they all reached the same home; and that it would be far more delightful, more honourable, to go to heaven from a heathen country than a Christian one.
>
> "Towards the latter end of 1815, when conversing on the subject of missionary work with Mr. Fuller, he asked me whether I should like to go; and intimated at the same time, that, should native preachers speedily be raised up, European missionaries would not be required. I could not help secretly wishing that all the posts of missions might not be filled up till I was old enough to go, being at that time only sixteen years of age."

The mind of William seems to have been at an early period impregnated with a similar sentiment by similar means. The progress of the gospel in India formed the frequent theme of conversation between the brothers. "One day," says Mr. Fuller, "on some allusion being made to the native preachers, Thomas burst into tears. On inquiring into the cause, I found he was greatly afraid that, as native preachers were rising up so rapidly, by the time he should be old enough to go, European missionaries would not be required. Some time afterwards they were overheard earnestly conversing on the same subject, Thomas, as usual, indulging his apprehensions. William, however, was a stranger to such feelings; he always hoped. 'Never mind, Thomas,' said he, 'the society cannot do without printers, and I am sure Mr. Fuller will recommend us, and then we can preach too, if we like.'"

It was natural that anxiety for usefulness abroad, where it was at the moment impracticable, should express itself by endeavours after usefulness at home, where no difficulties stood in the way. Accordingly, in addition to his exertions in the Sunday-school, Thomas Knibb took part in evangelical efforts at Thomas Street, a station in Bristol, with the students at the Academy. He also preached in the streets, and not altogether without a divine blessing, of which the following instance may be recorded. One Lord's day evening, preaching in a very low neighbourhood, he took a subject which few perhaps would have chosen for such an auditory—backsliding. One of his hearers, however, was arrested by it. At the close of the service a man more than eighty years of age came forward, weeping like a child, and stated that he had been brought to the knowledge of the truth when a young man, under the preaching of Whitefield in that city, but that he had long since returned to a course of sin, and had not for many years entered a place of worship. The impressions now made were, through divine grace, abiding, and the old man died a few years afterwards, rejoicing in Jesus.

The heart and habits of Thomas Knibb being thus prepared for missionary toil, he availed himself of an opening for the gratification of his desire which presented itself early in the year 1822. The church at Kingston, in the island of Jamaica, then under the care of Mr. Coultart, an agent of the Baptist Missionary Society, had established a free school, and were then in want of a master. Thomas Knibb offered himself for this service,* and in the month of July he was accepted by the committee of the society. Some letters of his mother which are preserved afford indications that his application was made with the knowledge and concurrence of his parents, and one which she wrote to him in reply to that in which he announced to her the result is so worthy of the occasion, and so characteristic of that noble-minded woman, to whom I must shortly again refer, that I would fain insert it entire. I content myself, however, with the following extract:—

MRS. KNIBB TO HER SON THOMAS.

"*August* 13, 1822.

"DEAR THOMAS,—We received yours dated August 4, informing us of the decision that had taken place. Though I had before heard of it, yet, when Mr. Fuller imparted to me the intelligence I experienced a struggle between natural affection and calm resignation. Although I do feel it, and very tenderly too, I would, and I think I can, say it is well. I doubt not but there will be seasons when I shall feel the trial more than at others, seasons which I sometimes anticipate. Possibly, nay, probably, some of them may never be realized, and in those that I may be exercised with I trust I shall have this promise to rest upon, 'I am with you always.' Among other mercies, I have to bless God for past experience of his goodness and faithfulness, and therefore I can trust him for the future. The dealings of my Heavenly Father have been such towards me, as in many instances to teach me most emphatically that my happiness must come from himself alone. 'My soul, wait thou only upon God, for my expectation is from him.' I scarcely know how to express myself with sufficient force upon this subject. Should your life be spared, you will perhaps more fully enter into it from your own experience.

---

* Dr. Cox states that Thomas Knibb was sent out for Manchioneal, but that he was detained at Kingston in consequence of the illness of Messrs. Coultart and Tinson.—*History of the Baptist Mission*, vol. ii., p. 44.

"When the boundless ocean rolls between us, we, my dear Thomas, shall have the consoling idea, that both are travelling to the same heaven, and that, should we meet each other there, separation will be no more known."

In order to qualify himself more fully for his intended post, Thomas Knibb spent the usual period of three months at the normal institution of the British and Foreign School Society, in London; and he sailed on board the Ocean for Jamaica, in the end of October.

CHAPTER II.

HIS EARLY LIFE, FROM THE SAILING OF HIS BROTHER THOMAS TO JAMAICA TO HIS DEATH.

Like his brother, William Knibb pursued, after making his Christian profession, an active and useful course. His care for the souls of others did not expend itself wholly on strangers, but directed itself also, with a happy consistency, towards the members of his own family. A letter is yet extant, written within a few weeks of his baptism, in which he solemnly and affectionately pleads with his brother James on the great subject of personal religion; and if some part of this letter is inserted here as a valuable illustration of the early character and piety of the writer of it, it is with the hope also that he, being dead, may yet speak to persons with whom the same arguments still require to be used. I take from the letter the following extract:—

TO HIS BROTHER JAMES.

"O my dear brother, how does religion appear to you? Doubtless you have heard that I have lately avowed myself on the Lord's side; but religion is a personal concern, it will avail nothing in the judgment day that our friends were those who feared the Lord—no, it will only heighten our condemnation. Have you any companions who wish to draw off your attention from these things, by telling you that it is a gloomy, melancholy thing to be religious? O! if you value your immortal soul, forsake them. Recollect that the people who would tell you that religion is gloomy know nothing about it. They know nothing of the joys of religion, and yet they pretend to tell others all that concerns it. How absurd would it appear to you if a person were to begin to talk to you about the excellence or pleasure of a thing which he had never seen, and knew nothing at all about, and how ridiculous would you think it if a person believed what he said; yet this is just what those people do who talk about religion as being gloomy and melancholy, fit for none but madmen, or hermits, and such like. Ask a Christian what religion is; and if he should tell you that it is gloomy, then the tale would be materially altered. O no! he would tell you that he never knew what true happiness was till he had a good hope through grace that his sins were pardoned, and that he had an interest in Jesus Christ. Christians may not show (nor is it right they should) that gaiety and lightness of spirit which sinners sometimes exhibit: but what is their mirth? Is it not 'as the crackling of thorns under a pot?' 'Even in their laughter their heart is sad, and the end of their mirth is heaviness.'"

In addition to his labours in the Sunday-school at Broadmead, the subject of this memoir assisted in the management of a school, connected with the same congregation, at Stapleton, a village about two miles from Bristol. Before he began to exercise himself in preaching, he manifested a lively interest in the efforts which were made by students and other gifted brethren to proclaim the gospel in the more destitute parts of the city of Bristol, and in the villages around it, and he was always ready to accompany and aid them, whenever, as was sometimes done on his suggestion, they occupied positions of difficulty and danger. Of the manner or the circumstances in which he was induced to enter the pulpit no information seems to remain; but I am able to state a few particulars illustrative of his zeal and energy in this department of labour.

It was in 1822, probably shortly after his baptism, that an effort was made to introduce the gospel into a populous and unenlightened part of the city of Bristol, by a member of the church at Broadmead whose name was Jones, a blind man, but one full of heavenly light. He himself did not attempt to preach, he merely accompanied the preacher. The person who undertook this duty was Mr. Samuel Nichols, then a student at the baptist college, and afterwards a missionary to Jamaica. Mr. Nichols preached several times in the street, and afterwards in a room offered by a woman whose heart the Lord had touched; and this room in Brick Street was in the end regularly supplied by the students. Mr. Nichols being called to a different station, Knibb, between whom and Nichols a warm attachment existed, succeeded him here. He is stated by his blind but judicious friend to have been bold and energetic in his manner, and to have commanded more attention than any one besides. He was the principal instrument of raising the number of attendants from ten to about sixty in the course of about twelve months.

In connexion with these regular services, he visited occasionally a place in the neighbourhood of Brick Street, called the Beggars' Opera, or colloquially the Beggars' Uproars: a place where persons of the class designated were accustomed to meet in the evening, after their daily rambles and operations in the streets of the city. Here he sometimes found as many as twenty carousing in a large room. It is said that when he spoke to them they at once became still, and hearkened to him with great attention; and, if nothing further resulted than this, (but who can tell?) the fact is honourable alike to his courage and his address. The Uproars was a place into which few preachers would have ventured, and in which far fewer would have been heard.

Some further light is thrown on the period of which we are now speaking, by two letters which pertain to it. After leaving Falmouth on his voyage to Jamaica, Thomas Knibb was driven back to that port, and detained there by contrary winds, and an opportunity of correspondence was thus supplied which William Knibb eagerly embraced. The letter written at this time is dated the 26th of November. In March he wrote again, assuming, what had not then been heard of, his brother's safe arrival in Jamaica. Some extracts from these letters I now introduce.

TO HIS BROTHER AND SISTER THOMAS.

"*Bristol, November* 26, 1822.

"I fully join with you in wishing that the next time the Ocean leaves the British shores, after it has wafted you in safety to your destined haven, I may be permitted to form a part of the cargo. My desire after missionary labour is still as great as ever, and, if it is the will of my God, I trust that I shall go; but I hope that I can rest resigned to all his will. If he has work for me there he will bring it to pass, and if not, I am sure you would not wish to see me arrive.

"My little school at Stapleton increases fast. Last sabbath I had thirty-six, which is more than have attended for some time past. I trust that God will smile upon this little seminary, and bless it. The meeting at Brick Street still continues to be carried on by friend Nichols with his usual zeal, and I think with much prospect of success. They still remember you with much affection and kindness, and, when I visit them, are always very earnest in their inquiries after you.

"Thomas Street meeting, which Nichols calls *my* bishoprick, increases very much in attendance. Since you left, the supply has devolved on me. Mrs. ——— has met with some opposition from one of her neighbours, who has been very bitter against her for suffering the Methodists to come into her house ; two or three weeks ago she was telling me of the opposition she met with, and seemed to be much cast down on account of it. This led me to a subject from the 34th Psalm, 'Many are the afflictions of the righteous,' &c., with the next verse but one. I mentioned persecution as one of the afflictions which often befell the servants of God in their endeavours to do good to others. It was rather strange that this very woman came to the meeting the very night (which was yesterday) ; she had not been for a very long time ; she paid great attention, and I am sure she must know to whom I referred, as I mentioned some of the epithets which she had made use of. I hope it will prove to have been for her good, that thus the name of the Lord may be magnified.

"I hope that, amidst these attempts to do good, I shall never forget to cultivate my own vineyard. O! I perceive that I have need of a double watch here, that God may keep my whole soul blameless, and that I may grow in every grace of the Holy Spirit, and thus adorn the gospel which I endeavour to proclaim to others by a consistent walk and conversation."

TO THE SAME.

"*Bristol, March*, 1823.

"I would fain hope that long ere this reaches you, you will be in some measure inured to the climate, and be enabled to prosecute the duties devolving upon you, as servants of the Most High, with diligence. O! to be employed for Christ, what an honour ! Angels would glory in this ; then how much more should those who from enemies were made friends, and are then employed as his ambassadors ! You no doubt have your difficulties and dangers, but be not cast down ; Christ your, and I trust my, Redeemer is sufficient for you, and he will make darkness light before you, and crooked things straight. 'His promises are kind and large, to those who on his grace rely,' and surely to none more so than to those who have left all the endearments of home, and the sweet society of friends, to be enabled to spread his banners and extend his kingdom. His presence, I trust, will be continually vouchsafed to you ; and if it should ever be beclouded, and darkness veil the path, 'behind a frowning providence He hides a smiling face.' O yes ! it is the weakness of our faith, and not anything altered in Jehovah, that causes these gloomy seasons to arise, and casts a veil over the path in which we tread. Then let us thank him for the past, and trust him for the future.

"Should it ever please the Disposer of events to call me to labour in that part of the vineyard, I trust it would afford me unspeakable delight. Yes, my dear brother, I think I could relinquish every British claim for the love of Jesus ; and cheerfully, yea, joyfully, join you in your glorious career. But when I reflect how many there are who possess far greater abilities than I do, I sometimes fear that it is presumption in me to expect it ; yet He who is infinite in power can make the feeblest instruments subserve the purposes which he has to accomplish. Should I ever join you, O may God endue me with power from on high ; may sin be banished, and may I be enabled to adorn the situation I may fill : but if not, O pray, my dearest brother and sister, that I may be permitted to join you in that day, when the ransomed of the Lord shall return to Zion with everlasting joy."

Thomas Knibb finally left Falmouth on the 10th of December, 1822, and landed at Kingston on the 20th of January, 1823. On the 11th of February he wrote a letter to William, giving a glowing and most interesting account of his first sabbath in Jamaica, and containing a hint that, as his removal to another station was not improbable, the Free School at Kingston might yet afford an opening for him. Thus encouraged, William wrote as follows, both on the general subject, and on his own views in particular :—

TO HIS BROTHER THOMAS.

"*Bristol, April* 2, 1823.

"Your description of the ordinance of baptism was truly delightful. O ! could the eye travel with the same velocity as thought, how quickly should I trace the scene, and recall with pleasing emotions the delightful spectacle ! O ! I did envy you the mental repast, when, before such an assemblage of persons, in a foreign clime, you were engaged in one of the most solemn and interesting ordinances connected with the Christian religion. You might well add, 'it will be a day long to be remembered.' With what holy ecstasy, may we suppose, would the angels witness the glorious spectacle ! With what holy fervour would they strike the golden harps, and sing, 'Worthy is the Lamb that was slain !' And those who have but a short time back been engaged in the same cause, but have now reached their reward, surely to them it would afford peculiar joy, and increase even the happiness of the celestial world. For there is joy in the presence of God over one poor negro that truly returns to God through the death of his Son. And is there any heart that feels no emotions of pleasure at the recital of such a scene as this ? Too true it is that by many it is esteemed madness and enthusiasm, but I trust that I can say that to me it was, and long will be, a source of joy exceeded only by the thought that I too am, I trust, a partaker of the same grace.

" But I will now hasten to a subject which lies near my heart, and involves my deepest interests, and may involve in it circumstances of eternal moment. You will readily perceive that I refer to the question which you propounded in your last, and wished me to state my views respecting it. But what, my dear brother, what shall I say ? How shall I reply ? O ! I do earnestly implore the guidance and assistance of the Holy Spirit to enable me to decide aright, and I can truly say that I have made, and do still make it a matter of earnest prayer to be guided by unerring wisdom. My prayer is, that, if it is consistent with the glory of God I should go, he would open a way ; but if not, that I may never leave the British shores.

" For some time before you left Bristol, or I had any thought that you would go to Jamaica, I felt an earnest desire to be employed in teaching the poor children of the negroes. Often did I picture to myself the delightful sight, should I ever witness it, when I should be surrounded by the swarthy sons of Africa, and be enabled to point them to the dear Redeemer. This desire has been considerably strengthened since your leaving England, and I do feel that no earthly tie could keep me from offering to go, did a situation offer, and did it appear to be the path of Providence. I have endeavoured to examine the motives which have induced me to make this choice, and though I have too often discovered them to be unworthy of so noble an undertaking, yet I do trust that they arise from a desire to be useful in the cause of Christ. I trust that I do not deceive myself. O pray for me, that I may not. I know that difficulties attend the path, but they do not dismay me; the source of all consolation is near, and I fear not if some of the streams be dry. God has promised that his grace shall be sufficient for his people, and on his promise I can go to the end of the earth. O! I feel it to be an honour to be employed for Christ. A poor, polluted sinner that deserved eternal destruction, to be received a friend, and be made an instrument in bringing others into the fold! This is indeed an honour unspeakable.

"Should it be the will of God that I should go, I think it will be as a schoolmaster. Here I feel in my element, and I should love to engage in it. I do not think that I could be ordained. My talents for public speaking are but small, and, if this could not be dispensed with, I feel afraid that it would prove a hindrance. I should not have the least objection to address the natives in Jamaica, but to speak to congregations in England is what I do not think myself capable of. I do still at times go to Thomas Street, and find it pleasant, but I feel a difficulty in speaking without writing first, which I have not time to do; but perhaps some part of this might in time wear off. However, preaching does not seem my element; but, if a person was wanted to go out as schoolmaster, and to assist in addressing at times, it would be the joy of my heart to be permitted to go.

"Search me, O my God! Enable me to try every motive which arises in my breast; and, if it is thy will that I should go, open a way before me! O may I never be a cumberer of the ground! What a character for a missionary! O! the tremendous curse which hangs suspended over him:—'Woe to the idle shepherd!'"

Within a month William wrote another letter to Thomas, in which, while his heart seems to overflow with gratitude in reviewing the way by which the Lord had led both his brother and himself, he bows submissively to what he deems the closing of the door against him, by an arrangement for Thomas to remain in Kingston. The reader will mark the reference with which the letter closes, to "the emancipation of the slaves in the West." Little did the movers of that question at Bristol know into what a heart their proceedings struck a spark of inextinguishable fire, or the possessor of that heart himself the blaze which it was subsequently to kindle. The trait is pleasing because it indicates consistency. It shows that from the very first he was the same. The following is an extract:—

TO THE SAME.

"As I have mentioned my thoughts on the subject of the mission in my last, I need not add more, except that my views are the same; but as Providence has placed you at Kingston, I conceive that no one will be needed, and I do not feel myself competent to go out under the character of a minister. The Lord's will be done. Here I can leave it. If it please him, I shall go; and if not, still he will take it well that it was in my heart.

"Endeavours are making to emancipate the slaves in the West, and it is hoped they will succeed. It is proposed to be gradual. There is a society at Liverpool, and a public meeting will be held at the Guildhall, Bristol, this week, the mayor to preside. Several merchants are on the committee. Mr. Foster will preach his next lecture on the subject; and I do trust that the poor degraded negroes, will, ere long, be set free from the chains of thraldom."

A letter to his sisters, which is without date, seems to belong to the summer or autumn of the year 1823. It discloses the facts that his health had failed—a result, it can scarcely be doubted, of his incessant toil—and that he had made a tour in Wales for its recovery, with happy effect. It is otherwise pleasingly expressive of ardent and simple-minded piety. I give the following extract:—

TO HIS SISTERS.

"I have just returned from my Sunday-school, and though I had rain all the way thither, still I never found myself more happy. My soul seemed to dwell in the sunshine of felicity, and I was enabled to hold sweet intercourse with God. Thus you see that my benign Conductor abundantly made up for the dreariness and inconvenience of the weather. When the sun illumines the path, and the gold-tinged fields wave with the breeze, the mind is apt to be too much captivated with the scenery, and to lose sight of the Creator; but when these external beauties are withdrawn, then it is delightful to find a sun-blooming scene within, and to feast on the inward treasures of the soul. This is something like taking a view of heaven, and its majestic beauties, through a misty enclosure; it seems to shine more resplendent from the gloom through which you perceive it. Tell, ye that know, how delightful are these refreshing seasons, how delightful it is to reach the delectable mountains, and with the eye of faith to take a glimpse of the glories of the heavenly state. This fills the soul 'with sweet surprise,' and enables it to pursue the path of life with greater ease, and to encounter the privations and difficulties which press on every side with greater firmness and resignation, knowing that all *these* things work together for good."

William Knibb formed at this time a part of a circle of pious and intelligent young friends, whose conversation turned frequently and freely on doctrinal points, and sometimes on the disputed points of the day. Illustrative of this matter I have several letters. The apologetic tone of one of them indicates that discussion sometimes grew warm; and the careful explanation contained in another, demonstrates that it did not always lead to a clear mutual understanding. "Such things were," and are. The letters are interesting, as showing what sentiments were at work in the formation of the future missionary, but they do not, I think, demand insertion here.

I shall close this chapter with a short extract of a letter to Mr. Nichols, written in April, 1824, referring to a very trivial matter, but yet so strikingly characteristic that I cannot prevail on myself to omit it. I could almost imagine that I hear Knibb now uttering the concluding words of it. It is as follows:—

TO MR. S. NICHOLS.

"*April*, 1824.

. . . . . "Well, then, I am on guard, not in Vine Street, nor in Duke Street, but on Marlborough Hill, at an old lady's, whose house has been attempted to be robbed several times. I sleep in the kitchen, with a pistol under my pillow; and, after perambulating a subterraneous passage capable of holding fifty men, and committing myself to the care of my heavenly Father, I lie on my hammock, and sleep soundly. The Doctor procured me this desirable affair, which, were there not a female ill in the house, I should not have accepted; but, as there is, it is one which I neither love nor fear."

CHAPTER III.

FROM HIS BROTHER'S DEATH TO HIS OWN ARRIVAL IN JAMAICA.

SUCH was the course of active piety in which William Knibb was engaged, when an event, not less melancholy than unexpected, turned his thoughts with redoubled energy to the West Indies. Thomas Knibb died, in the midst of labours and successes, on the 25th of April, 1823, after an illness of only three days. I may not pause to eulogize this estimable and faithful missionary. It must suffice to say, that he met the last enemy with holy serenity, and that his loss was severely felt by his associates. I must, however, arrest the progress of the narrative for a moment, in order to enrich these pages with the letter in which his noble-minded mother communicated the afflictive intelligence of his death to two of her children. For simplicity and pathos it can scarcely be exceeded. It is as follows: —

MRS. KNIBB TO HER CHILDREN, EDWARD AND FANNY.

"DEAR EDWARD AND FANNY,—How uncertain are our enjoyments, how fleeting our comforts! Little did I think, when I last informed you that I had had a letter from our dear Thomas, that even then there was one upon the seas to inform me, and the rest of us as a family, that he was no more. When I received it, as I was not acquainted with the hand, I was undetermined about taking it in, until I saw England upon the direction, then I supposed where it came from. I did not notice at first the black seal. When I saw the hand-writing, I perceived whose it was, but from the manner in which she commenced the letter, I anticipated the child was dead. As I read on, the cloud began to gather. I hastily looked through the letter to find the well known hand. Alas! it was not there. I said to your father, 'Thomas is ill or dead.' The more I read the greater was my agitation, until I threw it down, and ran up stairs. Hastily I descended, and said, 'He is dead, is he not?' Your father answered in the affirmative. After the first emotions were over, I trust I could say, 'It is the Lord; let him do what seemeth him good.' Shall I think he is gone to glory too soon? He has fought the fight, he has finished his course, he has kept the faith. Short indeed were his labours, but, as Mr. Wilson observed, he did a great deal in a little time; and though to us his early death is mysterious, yet it is all right in the divine mind. Although his sun did set ere it was noon, yet it has arisen with meridian brightness in that better world where the sun goes no more down. I lament not that he was sent to preach the glad tidings of a Saviour to poor, ignorant negroes. Many a tear will they shed upon his humble grave. Ye sable brethren, I envy you the spot. But why should I? I trust, through the merits of a Saviour, and the sanctifying influences of his Spirit, I shall be prepared (it may be shortly) to spend a long eternity with him in unmingled bliss. There as a family may we all meet, and not a hoof be left behind. We shall certainly meet him at the bar of God. O may his prayers, his tears, his counsels, his admonitions, but above all, his example, not rise up as swift witnesses against us!"

William Knibb went to Kettering, to meet his parents and the other members of the family on this affecting occasion. He tells his friend Nichols that "the assurance that the dear departed had reached the habitation of infinite and eternal felicity, shed a sweet ray of hope and serene joy over" the scene of domestic sorrow; and that he himself felt "a more earnest desire to be made useful in his day and generation."

He regarded this event as, in all probability, opening to him a sphere of labour which he had long contemplated with lively interest, and as addressing to him a loud call to occupy it: a loud call, but solemn, since it issued from the grave, and gave him fearful warning of the perils to which it summoned him. It could have excited no wonder if, under the circumstances, he had hesitated. He met the crisis, however, with his characteristic promptness. When the intelligence of his brother's decease was communicated to him by Mr. Fuller, his feelings were strongly excited; but immediately after the first gush of feeling had subsided, he rose up from table, and said, "Then, if the society will accept me, I'll go and take his place."

It does not appear that this resolution gave rise to any application to the society on his part, or that it was even communicated to any of those who conducted its concerns. He was, however, already in their eye, with a view to a different field. A note from Dr. Ryland to Mr. Dyer, dated March 27th of this year, contains the following passage:—"As to W. Knibb, he will be twenty-one next September. He has already formed an acquaintance with one of our members, and I do not think he would be willing to go out single. I do not think he would be willing to go to Sumatra at all. I rather question his capacity for learning a new language. He is a good printer, and I conceive would have talents for preaching far from contemptible. But I think he would be more suitable for the West Indies than the East." It is clear from this note, that Mr. Dyer had been thinking of him for Sumatra, and that he had been making inquiries with this view, when the lamented removal of his brother afforded an opportunity for carrying out the more judicious view of Dr. Ryland. "Mr. Dyer has written to the Doctor," says Knibb to his friend Nichols, "to know whether I should feel disposed to succeed my brother as a missionary, and I have given an answer in the affirmative. My mind and hand are in extreme agitation. I can scarcely form a word. The variety of duties I shall have to perform if I go strikes me with the most appalling feelings at times, but at others I can view them with something like composure. As to standing to confession, that will be tremendous. I wish you could or would do it for me, as that seems the hardest work of all. O do pray for me, that in all my concerns Christ may have the preeminence, and his name be glorified, whether I reside in Britain or in a foreign land."

The matter was brought before the committee on the 12th of August, and the following minute of what took place on the occasion is extracted from the official records :—

> "Letters were read from Dr. Ryland, dated the 7th and 11th instant, stating that Mr. W. Knibb had intimated his readiness to go to Kingston, and occupy the post vacant by the death of his late brother; and, as the opinion of Dr. Ryland and his friends was highly favourable, Resolved, That the offer of Mr. Knibb be accepted, and that he be requested to come up to town as soon as he can make it convenient, in order that he may study the British system of education at the Borough Road School."

I should have felt particular pleasure in inserting the letters above referred to, inasmuch as they would have exhibited the estimate then formed by judicious men of the subject of this memoir; but, unhappily, they cannot be found. The correspondence of the society for the year 1824 contains many letters of Dr. Ryland, but not these; and there is no guide but conjecture as to the manner in which, or the purpose for which, these have been abstracted. The Doctor's general view of him has already been given. In one of the letters which remain, however, another expression occurs which I think worth quoting, because it shows the impression made by the constitutional differences of the two brothers. Writing to Mr. Dyer, Dr. Ryland says familiarly, "William is a good lad, but not equal to Thomas." The whole meaning, I suppose, of this is, that Thomas was characterized by application and acquirement, William by vivacity and discursiveness. Men, however, even sagacious men, are short-sighted. Thomas Knibb was, and, undoubtedly, under the blessing of God, would have continued to be, an admirable and useful missionary; but William, as his course has shown, was the man for events—the man to mount the whirlwind, and control the storm. Dr. Ryland did not know that the storm was rising.

Knibb's feelings on his appointment were expressed in a letter to Mr. Dyer, in the following modest and simple terms:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Bristol, August* 21, 1824.

"It has been my fervent and daily prayer that the committee, and every one connected with this important affair, might be directed by the Spirit of truth, and that such measures might be adopted as were consistent with the will of God, and would result in the furtherance of that cause which it is my earnest desire to promote. I think that the suspense in which I was detained was of considerable benefit to me, in enabling me to cast all my affairs into the hands of a faithful Jehovah; who, I hope, will make me a good soldier of Jesus Christ, and enable me to act consistently in the important station in which I am placed."

To his friend Nichols he wrote a few days afterwards, as follows :—

TO MR. S. NICHOLS.

" *London, August* 29, 1824.

" MY DEARLY BELOVED FRIEND,—I believe I stated in my last that the committee of the Baptist Mission were then deciding as to the propriety of accepting me as a missionary, to fill up the place vacated by the decease of my beloved brother. The result of the decision is, that I am speedily to prepare to leave the shores of Britain, and to sail for Kingston; and I am now learning the Lancasterian system of education, as a pre-requisite for this important station. The instruction of the young will form the major part of my employment, which exactly accords with the feelings of my heart; and I hope that, if consistent with the will of God that my existence should be protracted, I may be the instrument of turning many children from darkness unto light, and from the power of Satan unto God. It is pleasing to feel an assurance that all our times are in his hand, and all our concerns under his control."

The following extract of a letter to his brother Edward, although dated one day earlier than the last, may find a suitable place here :—

TO HIS BROTHER EDWARD.

" *London, August* 28, 1824.

" My mind is much depressed at times in the prospect of bidding a final farewell to those who are so tenderly attached to me; but it is the cause of Christ, and we must sacrifice our enjoyments in his service. It is an honour to be employed for him, and I do feel that a greater honour is conferred on me than had I been raised to the highest post in the realm. Pray for me, my dearest brother, that every needful supply may be afforded me amidst the important duties which I am called to fulfil. I hope the glory of God and the salvation of sinners is my superior aim, and if I should lose my existence in the service, I trust a crown of life will be conferred upon me, which will abundantly compensate for every little exertion I make for Him who died to redeem my soul. . . . Your William is a poor, unprofitable servant; he feels it, mourns over it, and prays for more activity and ardour in the service of his Master. O that humility may be my constant delight! And never may I rise so high as when I feel humbled in the dust before the cross of Christ."

On the 27th of August he was introduced to the committee, on which occasion it does not appear that anything passed beyond the usual acts of Christian courtesy. A glimpse of him at the Borough Road School, where he went, as intended, for the purpose of acquiring the British system of education, is furnished by a gentleman who was then, and is now, in that establishment. The personal recollection of this gentleman is to this effect, that William Knibb was "chiefly distinguished for the exuberance of his animal spirits and his almost irrepressible tendency to frolic," and that "he was marked rather by incessant activity, than by any deep or earnest thoughtfulness." I am well pleased with this reminiscence—I might say, perhaps, particularly pleased with it. We have had evidence enough, both of the vigour of his mind and of the solidity of his piety; combined with these, "incessant activity," "exuberance of animal spirits," and even "an *almost* irrepressible tendency to frolic," are, *in a youth*, the finest elements conceivable for the formation of the man, and above all for the man who is successfully to encounter arduous toil and strenuous conflict.

The public service at which Knibb was designated for his work was held at Broadmead, on Tuesday, October the 7th, and Dr. Ryland addressed him on the occasion from the words of our Lord, "Be ye therefore wise as serpents, and harmless as doves," Matt. x. 16. From the address which he himself delivered on this solemn occasion I shall extract what relates to his choice of missionary labour. On this subject he spoke as follows:—

"In a short time after it had pleased God to convince me of sin, and show me my need of a Saviour, in order to my acceptance before him, I felt a strong desire to be employed in the instruction of the young in heathen countries, and frequently indulged myself in the pleasing imagination that I was surrounded by a number of the swarthy sons of Africa, unfolding to them the wonders of redeeming love; but I did not in the least expect that ever the honour would be conferred on me. In my petitions at the footstool of mercy, I often prayed, that if God had any thing that I could perform for him in a heathen country, in his own due time he would open a door, that I might be permitted to preach among the heathen the manifold riches of Christ; and had God seen fit never to permit me to leave the shores of Britain, I think I should have cause for gratitude that ever these desires were excited, as they led me frequently to his footstool, and gave an ardour to my petitions which I might otherwise never have realized.

"In the autumn I was called to bear the loss of my brother, who was accepted as a missionary, and who filled the station to which I am looking forward. Before he left I mentioned to him the feelings of my mind, and he encouraged me to hope that, provided they continued, they might at some future time be gratified. By his pious and animating letters the flame was kept alive, and I fondly looked forward to that period when I should join him in his labour of love. In the last letter which I received from him, he mentioned in a more particular manner than usual, that he was endeavouring to form a station for me, and anticipating my arrival with feelings of ardent delight.

"But God's ways are not as our ways, neither are his thoughts as our thoughts. In four days afterwards, I was called to hear that my beloved Thomas was no more. All my pleasing hopes of being united with him in unfurling the banner of the cross were now blasted. In this afflictive dispensation my Heavenly Father manifested himself unto me as he does not unto the world, and enabled me to commit all my concerns into his hands.

"My desires after missionary exertion now returned with double vigour, and it was my earnest prayer, in consistency with the will of God, that I might be permitted to occupy the place where my brother terminated his glorious career. As I knew that my ministers were acquainted with my desire, I thought it would not be advisable to make any distinct application to the society; I, therefore, merely mentioned to one of the deacons that, if Dr. Ryland should ask him any thing respecting my present views, he might answer that they remained unchanged. My friend having occasion to visit Dr. Ryland that day, he mentioned the interview he had had with me, when the Doctor said he had received a letter from Mr. Dyer, the secretary, wishing to know my present views on the subject, and his opinion respecting my fitness. Shortly afterwards my hopes were realized, and I was permitted to anticipate the pleasure of carrying on the work which my brother had begun.

"I trust this is the path in which God would have me to walk. I know that he does not need my efforts, and that he could accomplish all his designs without my feeble agency; but it is in the use of means that he generally performs his designs, and he can from the feeblest causes produce the mightiest effects. I know that there are trials and difficulties peculiar to the missionary life, and at the present juncture particularly so in the situation I expect to occupy; but I know also that the promise of the gospel is, that as my days are, so my strength shall be."

On the 14th of October it was determined in committee that Knibb should sail with Captain Whittle, in the Ocean, the ship which had conveyed his deceased brother to the West Indies, and a ship in which, by the combined kindness of the captain and the owner, Mr. Angas, a gratuitous passage to missionaries had been on several occasions afforded. On the 29th of the same month the official certificate of his appointment was drawn up and signed. His business now was the painful one of paying his last visit to Kettering, a touching reference to which will be found in the following extract of a letter to one of his early friends.

TO MISS M. WILLIAMS.

"*Doctors' Commons, October* 28, 1824.

"When I reflect on the amazing changes which have transpired within the last few weeks, it seems to me as if I had been indulging in idle reveries, rather than having in reality undergone such important revolutions. But a few months since, I was looking forward to a long and intimate association with my Bristol friends; but now these scenes are passed away, and in all probability I am destined never more to behold them in the flesh. But do I repine? O no! I still look forward, with inward satisfaction and holy exultation, to that glorious work in which I shall so soon be engaged, and the thought, that ere long, the weary travellers shall repose together in eternal felicity, gives a serenity to my soul, which cheers me amidst all the desponding feelings with which I am frequently environed.

"Since I parted with you I have had a series of trials to pass through. My beloved mother I have left on a bed of sickness, and Betsy, I fear, rapidly advancing in a decline. The feelings of my relations were of the tenderest kind. My dear sister Ann was overcome with grief, and only three of them could endure to say farewell. Nor could my dear mother endure the conflict, though she expressed herself perfectly resigned to the will of God. The artless simplicity of my youngest brother affected me much, and the scene is more easily to be imagined than described."

From this extract it would appear that Mrs. Knibb parted with William—her second large contribution to the welfare of Jamaica—in her chamber, and in silent sadness, or breathing only an expression of resignation to the divine will. Ill as she was, it would not have been surprising or unnatural if it had been so. It was otherwise, however. After he had left the chamber she rose from her sick bed, and went to the window, where, with the half undrawn curtain in her hand, she again caught his eye; and in this attitude she addressed to him these memorable words:—"Remember, I would rather hear that you have perished in the sea, than that you have disgraced the cause you go to serve." Having said this she sank again on her pillow, to suffer and to pray, scarcely less heroic than that devoted son who sped him joyously to his destiny of conflict and of triumph. That it was not without pain he departed, however, is manifest from the following extract of a letter to his brother Edward: —

TO HIS BROTHER EDWARD.

"*Bristol, October* 4, 1824.

"My heart I can assure you is full, and overflows with grief; but I trust in Him who has hitherto so kindly supported me, and hope that I shall be enabled to bear the trial which I shall so soon have to sustain. Pray for me, that my strength fail not. Whether we are privileged to meet on this side eternity or not, I hope, through the blood of Christ, to meet in another world, where these painful separations will be for ever unknown."

A cluster of small but illustrative incidents require to be just mentioned here. One is that he had lately been informed of the conversion of his twin-sister, Ann, in consequence of a letter which he had written to her. A second is, that a subscription being necessary for the hire of a new room for preaching at Brick Street, the friends insisted on his writing "something to put at the head of the collecting book." A third is, that he had "a very affecting parting" at Stapleton with his Sunday scholars, "who clung round him," says Dr. Ryland, "with tears, and told him that he must not leave them." Another is that, on his farewell visit to Kettering he delivered an address to the children of the baptist and independent Sunday-schools, with about two hundred spectators. It was perhaps an evidence that the spirit of his mission was coming on him, that, on this occasion (to use his own words) he "felt himself more comfortable than in any former exercise." The last is that, in the streets of London, one of the secretaries of the Bethel Union invited him to take out a Bethel flag; "to which," he says, "I consented, and I hope soon to have the pleasure of seeing it hoisted at Port Royal."

On the 5th of October, the subject of this memoir was united in marriage to Miss Mary Watkins, a member of the church at Broadmead; of whom, as she survives him, it becomes me here to speak only in general terms of cordial respect, and high Christian esteem.

At noon, on Friday, the 5th of November, Mr. and Mrs. William Knibb sailed from Blackwall. He kept a journal, by a few extracts from which both the circumstances of his voyage, and the exercises of his mind, will be presented to us.

"November 5th. Amidst all the feelings of pain with which I was exercised, I was enabled to cast my care upon God, and to put my trust in him; and though I felt that I was severed from the most endearing ties, I found a sweet consolation arising from the cause in which I had embarked, and humbly committed all my future concerns into the hands of Him who hath done all things well.

"6th. When all was righted, the boys were called down to prayer. After reading the 107th Psalm, I concluded in prayer, and found sweet consolation in committing ourselves to the care of God, before we entered on the billows of the mighty deep.

"*Lord's day*, 7th. Rose this morning with rather a heavy heart, but found my mind sweetly refreshed while walking the deck, from the cheering consideration that *my* God could hear my prayer as well on the water as on the land, and that his preserving care extended to the uttermost part of the earth. Was enabled, with serenity of soul, to look at beloved England, with the prospect of beholding it no more. I do feel it to be my ardent wish to be instrumental in winning souls to Christ. O that this feeling were more prevalent in my soul, and that I enjoyed more intimate communion with my Maker!

"10th. (Having been obliged to put back to Deal by a storm) Thought of dear Bristol friends, but felt no desire to return. Enjoyed much nearness to God, and thought that I would endure anything for him who had done so much for me. Felt thankful that I was not running from God, like Jonah, but that, like Paul, I was humbly endeavouring to advance his glory. As Mary says, 'tis

'Sweet to lie passive in His hand,
And know no will but his.'

"14th, *Lord's day.* Still waiting for a fair wind. If consistent with the will of God, earnestly desirous of being wafted to my destined habitation. Felt some sweet outgoings of soul to God, and much desire after an enlargement of every Christian grace. Thought that my present detention was designed to teach me how easily God could carry on his work without my agency. O that I may be clothed with humility, and be led daily to feel my unworthiness! Felt a longing desire to surround the table of the Lord with my Bristol friends, but prayed that I might not be permitted to indulge in a murmuring spirit.

"19th. Thought much while lying in the same place where dear Thomas lay but two short years ago, and was affected to tears. O, if such a short period is allotted to me, my prayer is that I may be able to do the work of an evangelist, and be faithful to death, that thus I may receive the final and eternal benediction, 'Well done, good and faithful servant.'

"20th. Proceeded with a steady wind onward towards the Isle of Wight.

"21st, *Lord's day.* Prevented having the means of grace to-day, through the violence of the weather. Felt a longing desire to frequent the house of God; and enjoyed much pleasure from the thought that *my* God could hear my poor prayer as well on the tumultuous ocean as in his sanctuary. O for a heart to thank him for his goodness, and for his manifold loving-kindness.

"22nd. Beat about to-day with contrary winds and a heavy sea, which impeded us in our course. I think that I never felt so much resignation to the will of God, and humility when viewing myself, as I have done this evening. I trust that I was enabled to be passive in the hands of my Maker, and felt willing either to live or die, as would most conduce to his glory. About twelve at night, the sea rose to a tremendous height, the wind blew from the southward a complete hurricane, and the ship became unmanageable. The captain feared that she would run ashore, and tacked starboard and larboard in order to prevent it, but found all his efforts unavailing; he was just about to order the masts and rigging to be cut away, when a breeze sprang up from the west, and saved us from otherwise certain shipwreck. He told us that the hand of God was so manifest in it, that he could not help shedding tears of gratitude. My Heavenly Father enabled me to bear this with solemn composure, and my dear Mary felt a perfect resignation to the will of God. In the morning I went on deck, and the sea was awfully grand and majestically terrific, boiling with the most tremendous fury. On the shore lay the wreck of a vessel which had been wrecked in the night; and, from the height of the cliffs, in all probability most of the crew were lost. Put back to Ramsgate, which, through much mercy, we reached without losing so much as a rope.

"23rd. The gale continued to blow with increasing violence. A vessel passed us, one side of which had been stove in in the night by another running foul of her. She was obliged to return to London to discharge her cargo. Soon after, the remains of a wreck drifted by us in broken pieces and casks. O what gratitude ought to reign in our hearts for the care which God has taken of us! I am a wonder unto myself that I feel no more desires after him. May my life, thus given, be more than ever consecrated to the glory of my God!

"25th. Sailed for the Downs, which we reached in safety.

"26th. Again set sail from the Downs, to which I feel no disposition to return.

"27th. Passed the Isle of Wight with a fair wind, and every prospect of speeding our course. Strange as it may appear, I long for, and hail with pleasure, a prosperous gale, though it wafts me from the land of my nativity, which I expect to behold no more.

"28th. Wind changed against us, and we were obliged to put back, being driven by the storm.

"29th. Found ourselves safely anchored at the Isle of Wight.

"December 5th. From the last date to this we have been detained at Cowes.

"From 5th of December to 5th of January detained by contrary winds at Cowes; found very kind friends there, and at Newport, and had many pleasing interviews with a church missionary, destined to Sierra Leone in Africa. Six of them lie alongside in the

Margaret; seven, sent out last year, have all entered into their reward. O that I may work while it is called to-day! Preached at the Wesleyan chapel in Cowes, and on the first sabbath in the new year at Niton, the other side of the island, a deplorably dark and benighted village."

Since the date of this remark a happy change has taken place in the condition of Niton and its neighbourhood, by means of evangelical exertions which have been both assiduous and successful.

This stormy season and long detention furnished the young voyagers with an opportunity of correspondence which was gladly embraced, and the letters written by him at this time will furnish some interesting extracts.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*On board the Ocean, off Deal, November* 24, 1824."

After describing the storm, and mentioning several wrecks, he says—" I will not swell the dreadful catalogue, but would endeavour to pour forth the feelings of my heart, in gratitude to that Being who has not suffered the least evil to befall us. 'O magnify the Lord with me, and let us exalt his name together!' It is my wish that a public thanksgiving may be tendered to God, for the mercies which we have received at his hands. On the evening previous to this storm, when I retired to rest, I felt an unusual solemnity of soul; I think that I never experienced such a spirit of resignation to the will of God since I knew the worth of religion. In conversing with my dear Mary, she mentioned that she hoped she should be spared one trial, namely, that of parting with me; and on my hinting to her the feelings of my mind on the subject, she was overcome. We conversed sweetly on the delightful theme, that all our concerns were in the hands of our best Friend, and committed ourselves to his future care and protection. We were soon awoke by the violent tossing of the ship, and the mate informed us that we were in much danger of being wrecked. You are, doubtless, ready to ask, 'How did my William and Mary feel?' My dear, dear Mother, your and our God was our support, and we both of us felt resignation to his will. O, have we not another plea to devote ourselves to his glory? I trust that a life thus mercifully given, will be more than ever devoted to him and to his cause. As soon as it was practicable we assembled in the cabin, and I read the 107th Psalm, and felt much going out of soul to God, in return for the signal favours bestowed.

"Though this detention is exceedingly trying to the flesh, I think it has taught me how easily the Lord can do without me in his vineyard. O for more humility and devotedness to God!"

TO MR. S. NICHOLS.

"*Off Cowes, December* 3, 1824.

"We have now been beating about the English Channel for a month, and have been in the most imminent danger of meeting with a watery grave. O, it was a tremendous night; but our hearts were stayed upon God, who supported us in the prospect of death and eternity. If I am permitted ever to reach the scene of my labours, I trust that this signal display of divine protection will act as a stimulus to urge me forward in the Redeemer's cause, and to work while it is day, that whenever I shall be called to render an account of my stewardship, I may be able to do it with joy, and not with grief."

TO MISS M. WILLIAMS.

"*Off the Isle of Wight, December* 3, 1824.

"Though I tenderly feel the loss of my dear Bristol friends, I am far from wishing to return. Still communion with God is as sweet, and I think sweeter than ever. The soul has now time to turn within, and you know how pleasant it is to find green fields, pleasant walks, and intimate friends, in the bosom of the mind. It is the sabbath of the soul. What a mercy it is, my dear friend, that we mutually enjoy a good hope, through grace, of eternal life! How it heightens that feeling of love which exists between us? Truly my heart is knit with yours in the bonds of Christian affection and esteem; and though we are now separated in this world, we shall meet again, in a purer, a more exalted region, and spend eternity in the presence of our God."

TO MISS SPURRIER.

"*Off Cowes, on board the Ocean, December* 5, 1824.

"Be earnest, my dear friend, at a throne of grace, that I may be a faithful steward. Poor Fleming and his wife, who are dead, sailed in this ship only the last voyage. O, if I am thus taken, may I be found in God. I hope your 'humble endeavours' prosper. We are, my dear friend, engaged in the same cause, and I hope shall meet with the same eternal reward. Much as I should like to see you, I fear it will not be till we stand before the throne of God. But how little does it signify, if we are but found in God! Ere this reaches you, provided our wind continues, we shall have passed the Land's End, and taken our farewell of England. May the Lord be our stay, and we need not fear. He can support us under every trial; and, blessed be his name, he has given us the greatest earthly blessing, a mutual love and esteem, which will sweeten and diminish all our trials, and give a double endearment to all our enjoyments. We have enjoyed ourselves much in the Isle of Wight in walking in the fields, and in singing the songs of Zion as we returned in the jolly-boat in the evenings. You should have been there; it would have added much to our enjoyment"

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Cowes, January* 5, 1825.

"It is now more than eight weeks since I cast my eyes on the shores of Britain, expecting to behold it no more; and little did I then imagine the dangers and toils to which I should be exposed, and the detention with which I should be exercised. Blessed be the name of the Lord, for he hath done all things well, and I hope that even from this I shall reap a harvest of good. How eminently calculated are such occurrences to impress upon the mind the vanity and nothingness of creatures, and the ease with which God can frustrate their most darling objects and fondest desires. He can perform all his pleasure without my feeble agency. O that I may feel that without him *I* can do nothing! Our heavenly Father has raised us up some kind and benevolent friends in the island, thus fulfilling his gracious promise, that he will never leave nor forsake those who put their trust in him. Mr. and Mrs. Cotton, at Cowes, have been exceedingly kind towards us, and in other places we have met with the most cordial reception. I have preached once at the Wesleyan chapel at Cowes, and had an attentive congregation; and last sabbath I took a tour to the other part of the island, and preached twice. My journey was exceedingly pleasant; and I hope God will deign to bless the humble, but, I trust, earnest attempt for the promotion of his glory. The distance from the ship was about fourteen miles, quite across the island, so that I went from sea to sea. I walked seven miles and rode seven, both going and coming, making in the whole twenty-eight miles. The village to which I went is called Niton; and till last sabbath the gospel has not been preached in the church. Much opposition is manifested to the *meetingers*, but I escaped unhurt, although mud was thrown at the door. I longed for their salvation. As I was a missionary I had a good company, and I felt a pleasure in unfolding to them once the love of Christ, hoping that it might prove a savour of life unto life, and not of death unto death. Mary accompanied me to Newport, where she remained at the house of a friend of the name of Starling, by whom the little chapel was built, and by whom we were treated in the most benevolent and Christian manner.

"I hope that it was a sincere desire for the glory of God which induced me to forego the associations of my friends, and take my station as an ambassador of mercy; and my prayer is that I may be faithful even unto death. I do not anticipate beholding my beloved friends again in the flesh, but I hope to see the major part (O that I could say all !) in the spirit. Here is my hope, my joy, that which gives buoyancy to my soul, amidst all the pain with which it is exercised, when I look on those seasons which are never to return. I am sure that God will be your protector and your guide. To him I can commend you, and I feel assured that to him you can commit your William. Do not cease, my dearest parent, to solicit that eternal blessings may descend upon me.

"I would fain indulge a hope that father is recovering of his indisposition. O that he were a decided follower of Jesus! How gladly would I do anything to bring him to a knowledge of the truth. I can only pray (this I will do while life shall last) that he may return unto Him from whom he has wandered, and receive that salvation which is revealed in the gospel."

An illustrative and characteristic episode occurs in this correspondence, which demands a few words of introduction. It appears that Mr. Nichols, to whom, as we have seen, Knibb was warmly attached, wrote to him a letter of rebuke for indulging too much levity. A letter from which I have already extracted a passage contains his reply to this, giving on the one hand such explanations as might be most available on his own part, and turning on his reprover with a charge of undue severity.

TO MR. S. NICHOLS.

"Before I commence, let me assure you that I believe that it was a regard for my good which prompted your epistle, and that the evil on which you animadvert really existed, and needed watchfulness; but I cannot help thinking that my dear friend displayed too much harshness in his manner of expression, and wrote in too assuming a manner for his castigation to produce any pleasing effect on the mind. In the communication of censure I think that the utmost tenderness is requisite, and that the person who applies his strictures should even conceal himself in the evil on which he animadverts, lest it should appear that a desire of displaying that selfish word, I, predominates.

"I know that it is well to be faithful, but there is considerable danger, in the eagerness of pursuing this, of forgetting the proper time, and the proper method. Now I think, my dear friend, that you have erred in this latter point; and I mention this more particularly, because I have heard it asserted, from several quarters that they feared your manner did not partake sufficiently of modesty, but that it was assuming, especially in your public engagements. This, by those who are not acquainted personally with you, will be traced to a cause from which it does not proceed, your being lifted up by your change of situation, a charge which I have endeavoured to repel. But, while it is necessary to guard against levity, there is a danger of falling into a distant and forbidding manner.

"I know that levity is my easy besetting sin. It has often caused me many a bitter pang, and led me mournfully to a throne of grace; but I think that, since I left, a remarkable change has been wrought in my feelings, which I attribute, in a great measure, to the connexion which I have formed with the partner of my joys and sorrows.

"I think that one great cause of my not paying a sufficient degree of attention to this part of my character, has arisen from my utter detestation of every thing formal and assumed. I have heard and seen so much pomposity and distance observed by young men when they have become candidates for the ministry, that I have been disgusted, and reminded of the language of Robinson, of Cambridge,—

> 'Forget the dunghills where they grew,
> And think themselves the Lord knows who.'

Their station has divested them of everything like affability towards their former companions, on whom, from their new elevation, they look with almost scorn and contempt. A desire to avoid this disgusting folly may have led me to the opposite extreme, but I think nothing would hurt me more than to be thought distant and formal. You know as well as I do, that religion does not consist in measuring our words and sentences, and trying them by the standard of opinion, whether they will agree with the sanctity of the Christian ministry or not, but in the cultivation of those principles which will endear us to the society of the faithful, and make us useful while here below. I was lately reading Newton on this subject, and he has this passage, 'There must be some *life* in youth, or we shall have no *warmth* in old age.'

"But I have said enough on this subject. Let us, my dear friend, while we would guard against evil on one hand, not rush to the opposite extreme; and ever remember that, whatever opinion our fellow creatures may form of us, we are what we are in the sight of God. To him we stand or fall. Our next meeting will be, in all probability, before the throne of the great Eternal. There I trust nothing will be seen to disturb or grieve us; meanwhile let us guard against every sin, particularly that of pride, and cultivate that lovely grace, humility. O, I feel the need of this, and it is my daily prayer that I may be clothed with it as a garment. I do not think that I have a long existence to spend; but whether you or I are taken first, O may we be found in Jesus, and receive his reward!"

On the 5th of January, 1824, the Ocean finally sailed from Cowes. Some further extracts from the journal will acquaint us with the incidents of the voyage.

"January 8th. Lost sight of beloved England, never expecting to see it again. Felt much on the occasion; but it is the Lord's work, and trusting in his strength would I proceed.

"14th. My dear Bristol friends are now at the prayer-meeting; though I cannot meet with them, I can, and do, unite in heart at that truly delightful exercise, where I have frequently found the presence of my God.

"16th, *Lord's day.* Hail, best of all the seven! How amiable are thy tabernacles, O Lord of hosts. My soul doth long again to assemble in the house of my God. It being moderate weather, service on board; preached to the sailors, who appeared to pay attention. Was truly gratified in witnessing many of them reading their bibles.

"20th. Yesterday a ship passed us which the captain thought was from Bristol, bound to one of the Western Islands. Thought she would hail us, but she veered off. There may be, thought I, letters on board for me. O Bristol! thou art truly precious unto me; yet I feel no disposition to return, but humbly relying on the merits of my adorable Redeemer, look forward with joyful anticipation to that state where I shall enjoy the society of those through eternity whom I have so much cause to love and esteem.

"23rd, *Lord's day.* Early this morning we passed the tropic of Cancer. My beloved brother passed this line on the same day of the week, more than two years ago, but he is now safe landed on the blissful shores of eternity, perhaps looking down on his former occupations with delight. For some days I have felt slight indications of indisposition. Should it please the Master whom, I trust, I serve, to remove me speedily from active labours in his vineyard, O that it may be to dwell with him for ever! How fleeting and transitory are all the employments and enjoyments of time, when eternity appears in prospect! When contemplating a near approach to it, I think I can say I have a hope by which I can plunge into eternity. All my hopes are placed on Christ. He is my all. May he be my eternal portion!

"28th. Had a conversation with our fellow passenger on slavery. His very attempts to justify it evince it to be replete with every enormity. He has slaves, but never punishes any but females, as they cannot be brought into subjection without it. He is an odious picture of the brutalizing and immoral tendency of this execrable system, which calls loudly, I was going to say, for the curse of every friend of common decency. I pray God that I may never view with indifference a system of so infernal a nature.

"30th, *Lord's day.* Preached to-day to the sailors from 'He that hath ears to hear, let him hear.' Addressed part of it to our fellow passenger, on the danger of hearing or reading the word of God in a cavilling spirit; felt much liberty, though extempore, as our captain likes notes no more than many in Bristol. I felt peculiarly thankful to God in thus aiding me in answer to prayer, and hope that his blessed Spirit will crown it with success. Though I aimed to be plain, the passenger expressed his satisfaction to Mrs. K., and I trust (which is of infinitely greater importance) that it was approved by Him whose I am and whom I serve. Towards the close of this day we were thrown into a state of alarm by the pitch kettle boiling over, and catching fire, through the carelessness of the boy who was set to mind it. Happily it was soon extinguished, though it had spread in flames on the deck, and we were mercifully preserved from being consumed by that most dreadful calamity, fire, in the midst of the Atlantic. O for a heart to praise the Lord for his goodness, in thus constantly vouchsafing his protection unto us! And may a sense of the extreme uncertainty of life lead me to seek more ardently those joys which are durable and eternal.

"February 5th. This day a month past we parted from Cowes, and we are in expectation of seeing some of the West India Islands in a day or two. To-day I have been employed in painting the guns, which we are now getting in readiness in order to be ready should the pirates bear down upon us, who much infest the coast, and commit dreadful depredations, generally murdering all they happen to board. We are well armed, having eight guns, and a quantity of muskets, swords, sabres, and boarding-pikes. I trust that we shall not need them, but that our merciful Father, who has hitherto delivered us from the violence of the sea, will deliver us from the violence of men. O Lord, our strength is in thee.

"6th. About half-past one we were much delighted with the cry of 'Land! Land!' I soon hurried on deck, and Mary followed. It proved to be Desirade, or Desired Island."

The Ocean arrived in sight of Jamaica early in the morning of Saturday, the 12th of February, on which day, at noon, our passengers landed in safety at Morant Bay, in that island. Here they were hospitably entertained by Mr. Finister, the only resident on the Bay, for two days. On Monday morning they took passage in a British vessel then lying there, the Simon Taylor, for Kingston, which they reached on the Wednesday following.

"As soon as we passed Port Royal," says Knibb, in a letter to Mr. Fuller, "a canoe came to us, and we entered it, to land. No sooner had I stepped into the canoe, than, 'Please massa, you Massa Knibb?' 'Yes.' 'We thought so, so like your broder. We glad to see you; we thought you were drowned, for we have been looking for you this month.' No sooner had we landed than another hailed me, 'O, massa preacher come! O, me must carry someting, me be so glad;' and the countenance indicated the feelings of the heart. I instantly procured a wherry, and we set sail for Kingston, which we reached in less than an hour, though not without getting a wetting, and arrived in health and safety at our dear friend, Mr. Coultart's, where we met with a hearty reception."

◆

CHAPTER IV.

HIS PUBLIC LIFE IN KINGSTON.

The Baptist Mission in Jamaica was commenced in the year 1814. At the period at which Knibb entered into its labours, six missionaries were in service: namely, Messrs. Coultart and Tinson, pastors respectively of two churches which had been formed in Kingston; Mr. Phillips, at Annotta Bay; Mr. Phillippo, at Spanish Town; and Messrs. Tripp and Burchell, at Flamstead, near Montego Bay. They had met with much opposition, but the work of the Lord had prospered in their hands. A seventh was now added to this devoted band.

I have several letters written by Knibb at this period, all of which are characteristic and interesting; but, as that which he wrote to Mr. Nichols gives the best exhibition of his views and feelings at the entrance of his work, I shall make from it my principal extract.

TO MR. S. NICHOLS.

"*Kingston, March*, 1825.

"I have now reached the land of sin, disease, and death, where Satan reigns with awful power, and carries multitudes captive at his will. True religion is scoffed at, and those who profess it are ridiculed and insulted. The sabbath is violated, and a desire seems to manifest itself by many of the inhabitants to blot the Creator out of the universe he has formed. Active opposition to the cause of truth has in some measure subsided, but the disposition to manifest it is yet felt, and many would rejoice if all the servants of God were banished out of the land. This, you will say, is a gloomy picture. Truly it is; but God sitteth on his throne, and all power is vested in him. He can control their rage, or make it subserve his purpose.

"The poor, oppressed, benighted, and despised sons of Africa form a pleasing contrast to the debauched white population. They gladly hear the word, and to them the gospel is preached. Notwithstanding I had been somewhat prepared for it by my dear Thomas, I have been surprised at the avidity they manifest in hearing the gospel. If the preacher feels affected, (and who can conceal his feelings, and who would wish?) they are frequently melted to tears, and a sobbing is heard through the chapel. Though many of them seem to have lost nearly every rational idea, such is the beautiful simplicity of the gospel, that though fools, they understand it, and joyfully accept the truth as it is in Jesus. Their knowledge is small, though not more so than might be expected, nor are the more lovely features of the gospel often displayed by them. They see men as trees walking. They are bursting through the thick gloom which has long surrounded them, and it will be a long time ere they may be denominated by any other name than babes in Christ.

"I have been much employed in giving tickets to the members and followers, to the number of 3000 or 4000. Their conversation generally turned on my likeness to my brother, which they could not account for. 'Ah, sweet massa! him just like him broder. Him voice, him face; me must look. Me hope massa well. How misse do? Me hope him well.' This was the general strain of their conversation. I frequently told them to go home and pray to God that he would bless their massa. 'O yes, me sweet massa, me no forget to pray for massa.'

"I have paid a visit to the interior, to Mount Charles, where I had a congregation of 1000 plantation slaves. They were all dressed respectably, many of them very fine. They listened with great attention, and begged that I would come again, which I purpose doing very soon. I should feel much pleasure in taking you to this enchanting spot, the road to which, though dangerous, is very romantic. Sugar and coffee plantations, oranges, &c., were to be seen all around; and the majesty of the mountains, whose summits were far above the clouds, highly delighted me. Though it is quite secluded, and the chapel often in the clouds, I should love to live there that I might enjoy the prospect; for,—

'Henceforth I shall know
No spot so vacant, be but nature there,
No waste so barren but may well employ
Each faculty of sense, and keep the heart
Awake to love and beauty.'

"It is customary here to name the children of the members, and I think that it is a practice likely to be productive of good effects. I have had one or two of these christenings, and enjoyed them, though I wished that I could enter more fully into the feelings of the parents. The parents bring the child into the chapel after service, and the minister takes it in his arms, and names it. On returning it to the mother, he delivers a short address on the importance of training up children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord, and prays for a blessing at the close. We are glad to embrace every opportunity of talking with them, as they are so ignorant, yet willing to be instructed, and as so few opportunities occur."

I cannot pass over this extract without remark. The practice of naming children, somewhat after the manner described in it, has had a wider prevalence than it has now, although probably it still exists, among baptists in England; but it has been deemed by many, and I think with justice, to possess too much of the *animus* and resemblance of infant baptism to be capable of being wisely, or even safely, employed. I beg it to be observed that Knibb expressly calls the services (no doubt in the current language of the island) *christenings.* The notion, therefore, which the people attached to them in Jamaica admits of no question; and it is evident that the practice must have sanctioned and perpetuated all the ideas connected with the baptism of babes. I cannot help expressing my conviction, that in this way there must have been done more mischief than can have been counter-balanced by the most solemn exhortations to parental duty.

I feel constrained to add to this long citation a single sentence from a letter of this date to his mother. "I feel much pleasure," says he, "in looking forward to my engagements, but at times the weight of responsibility almost overwhelms me. I need much of the gracious aid of the Holy Spirit, for I am poor and weak, and without him I can do nothing. What a mercy it is that he will afford it, and make those who confide in him instruments of advancing his glory in the earth! O for grace thus to live, that death may be eternal gain."

The reader of course recollects that Knibb has come to a land where slavery, as a fact, stares him in the face in all its fearful aspects, and is ready to ask whether he has given utterance to any sentiments upon it. He has, and they are worth hearing. In a letter to his mother, written soon after his arrival, is the following passage: —

TO HIS MOTHER.

"The cursed blast of slavery, has, like a pestilence, withered almost every moral bloom. I know not how any person can feel a union with such a monster, such a child of hell. For myself I feel a burning hatred against it, and look upon it as one of the most odious monsters that ever disgraced the earth. The slaves have temporal comforts in profusion, but their morals are sunk below the brute, and the iron hand of oppression daily endeavours to keep them in that ignorance to which it has reduced them. When contemplating the withering scene my heart sickens, and I feel ashamed that I belong to a race that can indulge in such atrocities. It is in the immorality of slavery that the evil chiefly consists. Leaving altogether the injustice of the thing out of the question, this feature of slavery is enough to make every Christian earnestly wish that it may be for ever banished from the abodes of men. I can easily account for persons becoming familiarized to slavery, and having a dislike to the slaves, as they are very trying; but it ought ever to be remembered that this proceeds from the system, and that the owner has a large portion of the blame attaching to him. What a mercy it is that to such poor benighted beings the gospel is preached! Here is a ray of light amidst the general gloom. This cheers the heart of your son, which would otherwise sink. To proclaim liberty to the captive, and the opening of the prisons to them that are bound, is a delightful employment, and here would I dwell that I may be thus employed; with my present views, however, nothing else on earth should tempt me to remain."

TO HIS BROTHER EDWARD.

"The more I see of slavery, the more I hate and abhor it. It appears to me to be the foulest blot under heaven, and to spread a withering and pestilential influence over every land which is infested with it. Never, my beloved brother, argue in support of a system so corrupt, so repugnant to every feeling of right and justice, and which must be viewed by God with manifest abhorrence. I do not thus write because I think that the slaves are not well off in temporal things—they have generally enough and to spare; but it is the state of their minds—here you have a barren waste, without anything to relieve the eye. And this moral degradation is urged as a reason why they should not be freed. Their oppressors have reduced them so low, that they can plead their oppression as a reason why they should continue to oppress. But let it not be thought that the slave is the only one who is vile; the white population is worse, far worse, than the victims of their injustice. There is scarcely a chaste person to be found, except such as have a sense of piety. It is here that the evil lies. Though I have been here but a short time, I have seen enough to disgust my soul; nor do I envy the feelings of that person who could view with indifference a system which is glutted with crimes both against God and man. O my soul, come not thou into their secret; unto them, mine honour, be not thou united."

The reader will naturally observe the great, and even exclusive force with which the moral pollution of slavery struck the mind of the young missionary. This impression, which was highly honourable to his religious feelings, did, in the existing state of his knowledge, no discredit to his penetration. A line or two from his letter to Mr. Fuller, already quoted, will show that the appearance of gaiety often assumed by slaves in towns was far from imposing upon him. "When I first beheld a slave," says he, "my heart sank within me; nor could his smiling face dissipate the gloom that overspread mine, for the fact that a person could be happy in a state of slavery seemed to me to be one of its most accursed fruits." He had opportunities of learning afterwards how very far the condition of the slaves in general was from warranting his first impression, that their temporal comforts were abundant.

William Knibb, the reader is aware, was sent out specifically to take charge of the school at Kingston, which had been under the care of his deceased brother; and although some thoughts had, as appears from the correspondence, been entertained by Mr. Coultart of fixing him in a still more important position at Port Royal, yet this became in the end his actual destination. In this position let us now regard him.

His first glimpse of the school was taken the morning after his arrival. The following account of his reception and impressions he gives to Mr. Fuller:—"The little dears leaped for joy when I entered, and many could not refrain from dancing, for a negro must express his joy. Many of them are slaves, but the greater part are free. Their writing is excellent, and they improve vastly. Could you visit the school, you would feel abundant cause to say that my brother had not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

Of the establishment itself, as it was at the time it came into his hands, he gives the following piteous description in a letter to Mr. Dyer, on the 16th of April:—"The school is much reduced since my dear brother's death. It is in want of everything requisite for a school, as almost all the slates, books, &c., are either torn or broken. Pens, ink, penknives, and paper, there are none of, and how I shall proceed I know not, but I hope you will not be long ere you send the necessary supplies. It would truly rejoice my heart if the committee would bestow money to build a school-room. The present one is altogether unfit. It is in a low place, completely out of the way, and when it rains it cannot be opened in consequence of the gully, which flows like a river, and in which some time ago one of the boys was nearly drowned. Add to this, it is so small that it will contain but few children, and so badly constructed that it is impossible to pursue the Lancasterian system as it ought to be performed; while, being so confined, it must be more wearying than a large one would be with many more scholars."

Of the situation of the school-room he says in another letter—"It is built close to a deep gully, the sand of which is so hot that the walk up it is exceedingly painful; while the children are in danger of hurting themselves should they fall, as it is plentifully strewed with old hoops and broken bottles. When it rains, this place is at times from six to eight feet deep in water, so that no school can be held. The room itself has no ceiling, and is shielded from the rays of an almost vertical sun only by thin boards, or shingles. I can truly say that it is not at all fit for the instruction of children in so oppressive a climate as this is, and that it is enough to consume the health of any European, however strong."

Knibb's resolution to erect a new school-room was now taken, and promptly carried into execution. The work was commenced on the 9th of August, 1825, and finished by the commencement of the following year. The building was in dimensions sixty feet by thirty-four, in plan exactly resembling the Borough Road School, and in capacity adapted to accommodate 250 children. It was erected on the mission premises, close to the chapel, and in the most healthy part of the city, the sea breeze blowing directly through it. It was opened on the 4th of January, 1826, with what inaugural ceremonies I know not, but it was probably not with much pomp; the erection of it led, however, to many substantial advantages.

From the first hour of Knibb's superintendence, and notwithstanding all its drawbacks, the school had been improving. He was engaged in it from nine in the morning till three in the afternoon; and he had quickly the pleasure of seeing order restored within, and of receiving accessions from without. The admiral then on the station gave him a proof of his confidence, by committing to his care a young African who had just been taken out of a slave-ship. He found that the children made great proficiency, and felt peculiar pleasure in seeing two slaves, a boy and a girl, at the head of their respective departments in the school.

The opening of the new school-room gave a powerful impulse to this course of improvement. Within six months from this period, he received a hundred and fifty new pupils, and the general attendance amounted to two hundred and twelve. Early in the year he formed a sabbath-school for children and adults, with great success. "I feel," says he, in a letter to Mr. Dyer, "more pleasure than I can express, in being able to inform you that one old slave has been taught from his alphabet to read the Testament, and that many others are in such forwardness that I hope soon to have a Testament class. We have about sixty men and forty women, and the earnestness they manifest surprises us all. Not a week passes but some come to enlist themselves, as they call it, whom I am obliged to send away for want of books. This grieves me to the heart."

He had also a monthly union sabbath-school prayer meeting, held alternately at the new school-room and at Mr. Tinson's chapel. He had also the further pleasure of seeing the usefulness of the school extend beyond its immediate limits. "There is now," says he, "a most intense desire manifested in the younger part of the community here for instruction, and numbers who are too old to come to school employ children to teach them in the evenings. One of my children had seventeen young men and women whom he thus taught. Many of them have three, four, or five scholars, from whom they receive five-pence or ten-pence a week, and they tell me that they improve fast. So the blessings of the school are not confined to it, but are extending in every direction."

At Christmas, 1826, the first public examination of the school was held. Two hundred and thirty children assembled at the teacher's house, and went in procession to the school-room, where about three hundred persons, some of them of the first respectability, were in attendance as spectators. The result of this examination was so gratifying as to render the scene to the superintendent "one of the most delightful" he had ever witnessed.

The prosperity of the school continued without interruption through the year 1827, which was closed with another highly gratifying public examination. In the course of it Knibb was cheered by an instance of apparent usefulness, of which he gives to Mr. Dyer the following account. "One of the scholars," says he, "died a few weeks ago, I hope, in the assurance of enjoying the happiness of heaven. I visited her, but the disorder was so rapid that she was not able to say much. A little before she died she said, 'Lord have mercy upon me, Christ have mercy upon me.' Seeing her mother weeping, she said, 'Do not cry, my mother, for me; but pray to God, and he will bless you. You do not know but this sickness is for my soul's salvation; I know that Christ will not turn his back upon a child that calls upon him. Lord have mercy upon me. . . . Since five o'clock I have been going to heaven, and I cannot reach yet. Do, Lord, come and meet me; why do you stay so long?' She then wished to see me again, but I could not visit her, as I was from Kingston. Finding I could not come, she said, 'Well, I have my Christ, my Christ; Amen, Amen,' and expired."

On the 11th of July, 1828, he forwarded to Mr.

Dyer his half-yearly report of the school, which continued to be in a highly satisfactory state. The increasing desire for its advantages, indeed, had suggested the importance of enlarging the institution, by the erection of a distinct apartment for girls. The foundation of this edifice was laid by the children themselves, on Wednesday evening, July the 30th, in the presence of many spectators. Nearly three hundred scholars, most of the girls dressed in white and holding a small bunch of flowers, went in procession from the teacher's house to the school-room, and from hence, after sundry preliminaries, to the spot, where the stone was laid "by the general monitor of order, assisted by his sister, the general monitor of reading," and the ceremony was concluded by the whole assembly singing the national anthem. "One of the most delightful meetings," says Knibb, credibly enough, "that it has been my happy lot to witness in Jamaica."

Pressed as he was with a heavy debt on the school, and still very defectively supplied with school materials, especially with books for the library, he made frequent and earnest applications to his private friends in England. I shall insert only two extracts from his letters on this subject; the one of them affording an example of his persuasive appeals, and the other of his grateful acknowledgments.

TO HIS SISTER FANNY.

"*Kingston, December* 30, 1828.

"Could you not interest some of your friends in my behalf? We owe £1000 for the new school, and I wish to obtain some useful books for the little dears to read. *Pity the poor Africans.* Help me if you can, and send me something. Could they see you their eyes would sparkle with pleasure, and if ever they see anything you send for them, they will say, 'O me tank you, me heart tank you, me sweet bucra, me sweet misse.' If you can send me any library books, or some money towards defraying the expenses of the school, I shall be glad. 'Tis for the poor benighted slave I plead, and for those who were so and have been freed by their owners. Mind, 'tis *universal education*. I admit barbarians, Greeks, Jews, bond, and free. I teach them the bible, not the peculiarities of a sect. My dear Fanny, do try in your circle; think of the poor little girls who have no one to teach them. I wish you could see them; then even a stony heart must feel, much more yours."

TO MISS MARGARET WILLIAMS.

"*Kingston, May* 26, 1827.

"MY DEAR FRIEND,—As I am debarred by the inclemency of the weather from attending the school, I very gladly embrace the opportunity afforded of thanking you and my kind friends at Bristol, for their very valuable presents, which arrived safe this week. Could my beloved friends have beheld the glistening eyes of the children at the opening of the box in the school, I think they would have felt sensibly that it is more blessed to give than to receive. The small books have been placed in the school library. The hymn-books, &c., they will strive hard to obtain as rewards. Nothing is so gratifying to them as hymn-books, as they are remarkably fond of singing. Would it not please my friends to hear one of the boys give out, 'Come, children, hail the Prince of peace,' and one of the girls set the tune, say Refuge une, which they sing delightfully? I am sure it would."

The institution remained under the care of Knibb for nearly a twelvemonth after its enlargement, but his health now entirely failed, and he merely held his situation until a successor could be appointed. With this transaction, therefore, I close the account of his scholastic career. Less cannot be said than that he acquitted himself in it with eminent diligence, ability, and success. I turn now to contemplate his direct labours in the gospel ministry.

Although he had not been sent out with a primary view to the ministry, his services in this department were put into requisition at a very early period after his arrival in Jamaica. The pressing necessities of the people demanded them, and he was both able and willing to meet the demand. Had the funds of the mission been adequate to the expense, Mr. Coultart would at once have stationed him at Port Royal; but what could not be done in a direct manner was soon effected incidentally by the providence of God. The extreme heat of the weather at Kingston so seriously affected Mrs. Knibb's health, that a temporary residence at Port Royal was recommended to her. The opportunity thus afforded was promptly improved, and the place of worship there, in which Thomas Knibb had preached, and in which no voice had been heard since his had been silenced in death, was re-opened by William Knibb on the 17th of April, 1825. I give the following brief account of this affecting circumstance from his own pen, as found in a letter to his brother and sister, written on the following day.

TO HIS BROTHER AND SISTER.

"*Port Royal, April* 18, 1825.

"Yesterday we opened, for sabbath evening service, the place which has been closed since dear Thomas's death. I believe he preached in it exactly a year ago, for the last time, on a sabbath evening. I felt much in opening it, for who can tell but that soon my work may be closed, and the hand that addresses you, like his, be cold in death? This time last year he visited Port Royal for his health, and left to return no more, and now I am called here by the indisposition of my dearest earthly friend: such a similarity calls forth many painful emotions, but the hope of a glorious rest in reserve dissipates the gloom, and enables me to say, I know that all these things shall work together for my good."

After his return to Kingston he continued to supply at Port Royal, "going down once a week in a canoe;" and, in writing to his mother on the 28th of December, he expresses his hope that much good had been done. On the 7th of August, 1826, he says to Mr. Dyer, "The sabbath before last the ordinance of baptism was administered at Port Royal. It was a truly interesting service, and created much sensation, as the ordinance had never been seen before in the place. I heard the candidates, and hope that they are indeed followers of the blessed Jesus."

The members at this station, to the number of one hundred and thirty, were formed into a church on the 14th of August, 1826. On the 26th of May, 1827, Knibb gives to Miss Williams the following graphic sketch of a baptism there:—

TO MISS M. WILLIAMS.

"Picture to yourself a spacious harbour, about four miles across; a small spot of this surrounded with ropes and stakes in a circle; this spot surrounded by canoes filled with spectators; the fortifications covered with people—all as *still* as possible. By and by you hear distant sounds of voices, and a little band approaches you, two and two, clothed in white, singing as they walk over the sand,

'Jesus, and shall it ever be,
A mortal man ashamed of thee?'

They arrive; a hymn is sung, a prayer offered, and just as the sun first beams on the sabbath, we descend into the water; and there, surrounded by multitudes, baptize them in the name of the adorable Trinity. When I was baptizing I was filled with joy and peace, and gave out in the water,

'Why was I made to hear Thy voice,
And enter while there's room.'

Tents are erected on the spot. It is rather amusing that, at the last baptizing, a well of fresh water was discovered, which is called the *Baptists' Well*. But it is better to know that another well has been opened, which contains the water of life. Lord, evermore grant that we may drink thereof!"

To his sabbath-school at this station I find the following interesting reference, in a letter to his mother:—"I have established a sabbath school for adults and children, who literally had no one to care for their souls, and who used, many of them, to spend the whole of the sabbath in the service of sin. I have ninety children and fifty-four adults; and when my supply of books comes, which I expect next packet, I shall in all probability have more, as it has been established but three weeks. Two of the magistrate's daughters, who attend regularly at the chapel, have engaged as teachers, and seem truly zealous in the work. It is an interesting sight. O that God would indeed bless it! I feel much for it. Pray for it, and for me also, my beloved relatives."

In process of time the "neat little chapel" at Port Royal, was found insufficient to accommodate the hearers, and at the commencement of the year 1828, Knibb made his first experiment in chapel building. The reader will probably be amused at the brusque but characteristic manner in which he informs the secretary of the Baptist Missionary Society of this circumstance.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston*, *February* 11, 1828.

"In my last I informed you that we were under the pleasing necessity of enlarging the chapel at Port Royal, that accommodation might be afforded for those who wish to hear the gospel; I am truly happy to say that before this reaches you we expect to have the alteration completed. On taking down the roof of the chapel it was found to be very insecure. It had given way in the centre six inches, so that a new one has been made for the centre of the chapel, which will make the premises more valuable to the society, and the chapel more commodious for the worship of God, as the ceiling will be raised three feet. I suppose that the expense will not be far less than £250 or £300. I have collected about £150, and hope, should the Divine Being spare and assist me, to defray the whole expense in the course of the year."

The enlarged chapel, which was adapted to hold from four to five hundred persons, was opened by Messrs. Coultart and Tinson in the month of April, 1828, with crowded auditories, and "particularly interesting" services. The church also was rapidly increasing. The large numbers — large as compared with English experience—who pressed into the profession of Christianity, struck him from the first with grateful joy. In his proceedings respecting them he does not seem to have manifested either eagerness or incredulity. Desirous on the one hand to discern the evidences of a work of grace, he was on the other not unwilling to recognize them. Thus for example he writes to Mr. Dyer:—" Since I last wrote, we have had a very pleasing addition to the church in Port Royal. Some time ago I baptized twenty in the sea, three of whom were scholars in the sabbath-school, and all I hope were partakers of divine grace. Their simple narratives pleased me much: O that they may persevere even unto the end!" And in another letter he says—" I have been much employed in hearing the experiences of the poor people, some of which were very affecting and cheering to the mind, and evinced that the Holy Spirit had been working upon their hearts. If they have deceived us, we have not deceived them; we are exceedingly plain with them."

Can it be deemed a wonder that he should give credence to professions of piety, when he found such as had been previously made confirmed in death by such scenes as the following?

"I have lately been called to witness the death-beds of some whose experience has rejoiced my heart. One poor female slave, who had been ill of a decline a year, was in this number. I found her lying on a mat on the floor, her head supported by a chest. Never did I see such an object. When I entered, she said, 'O massa, me glad to see you ; me thought me should die, and not be able to tell you how good our Lord is ; O massa, him too good, too good, for me poor neger.' After questioning her, I asked her if she was afraid to die ; her eyes sparkled with delight : 'No, massa, Jesus him die for me, me no afraid to die, and go to him—him too good.' O, thought I, this is religion. Here is a poor slave, with scarcely any comforts, who has been lying for a year in this hut, and can talk of nothing but the goodness of God. I prayed with her, and wishing her an abundant entrance into the kingdom of God's dear Son, took my farewell ; she squeezed my hand, told me to 'say how de to Massa Coultart, and tell him me wish him may have two crowns when him come to heaven.' Soon afterwards she died, rejoicing in that love of which I doubt not she is now a happy partaker. While committing her body to the earth, I rejoiced that soon it should arise without corruption, and be for ever in His presence. There may I meet her!"

Knibb's ministerial services were not confined to Port Royal. His aid as a preacher was occasionally required in Kingston, partly on account of the great amount of labour devolving on the missionaries there, but more especially in consequence of the failing health of Mr. Coultart, for whom he had frequently to officiate. His preaching in this city, however, was well nigh interrupted by an unexpected obstacle. At that period no person was permitted to become a religious teacher in Kingston without leave from the Court of Common Council, that leave being expressed in a document called a licence. Such a document was always reluctantly granted, and it could not in any case be obtained without the presentation of a certificate, bearing the official appointment of the party *as a preacher* by some society in England. This Knibb did not possess. He had been appointed primarily as a school-master, and consequently he could not obtain a licence as a preacher.

For a time he evaded this difficulty, in part by the goodwill of a single magistrate, who, by a singular coincidence, had been an occasional hearer at Broadmead, Bristol; and in part by the influence of Mr. Coultart, who was very highly respected in Kingston. He preached, however, merely on sufferance, and was liable to interruption at any moment, or on any fresh out-break of hostility to evangelical labour. It was no doubt of the utmost importance that a licence should be obtained for him, and an application was accordingly made to the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society for the necessary certificate. Can the world learn without a smile that so grave a body, and of such a denomination, hesitated—not long, indeed, but they did hesitate—to give Knibb the requisite document, because he had not been academically educated? Let the following letters be read upon this singular matter.

MR. TINSON TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston, November* 23, 1826.

"You are aware that our brother Knibb came out destitute of the necessary documents to obtain a licence, and I have understood that you have been unwilling to supply these, when applied for subsequently to his arrival here, partly, if not wholly, on the ground of his not having received an academical education. Now certainly education is much more valuable here than many of our friends in England imagine; but it is not so much classical attainment, as sterling piety, a proper missionary spirit, with a good school education, and brains to make use of it. These Mr. K. possesses in no ordinary degree, and he has shown himself hitherto a most active and indefatigable servant of the mission. Whether he came out expressly to preach or not, he has preached, and does preach every sabbath, nor can the stations here, now Mr. Coultart is absent, do without his assistance; but this they are likely to lose without immediate attention on the part of the committee, in sending out such documents as will authorize him to apply in the regular manner for permission. The Common Council agreed a few days ago, when application was made, to connive at Mr. K.'s preaching till the quarter sessions; but, on applying yesterday before the presiding magistrates at the Court-house, they refused to grant a licence on his not producing the papers required, and had it not been for the friendly feeling of two of the magistrates, he would have been at once prohibited. As it is, he is only covertly allowed to officiate till this can reach you, and an answer be returned; and during that time he is subject to annoyance.

"Do, my dear Sir, do get the committee to attend to this business as early as possible, since life and health are so precarious. We stand pledged to get out the necessary documents by the next quarter sessions, if possible."

W. KNIBB TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston, December* 16, 1826.

"You are aware, my dear friend, that I came out unprovided with documents as a *minister*. When I wrote to you on the subject, you replied, 'that it was in consequence of my not having been instructed in an academy.' It is exceedingly painful to me again to obtrude this subject on your notice, but my continuance as a missionary depends in a measure upon it. I hope the society will not put me to the mortification of again appearing in open court, and again being refused. I hope they will remember that here most look with a jealous eye upon us, and would be glad to stop the progress of the gospel. At present I have to supply Kingston every fortnight, and Port Royal every week. I love the employment, and I have reason to hope that God smiles upon my labours. I expect to baptize in a fortnight, and it would almost break my heart to be debarred inviting sinners to Jesus, especially where thousands are perishing for lack of knowledge. May I earnestly request that you will write by return of packet, and if agreeable to the society, send the documents, with the Lord Mayor's seal?"

The subject thus presented to the committee was considered by them on the 1st of February, 1827, and it is satisfactory to state, that the necessary documents were immediately drawn up and forwarded.

Knibb took an active part in an attempt which was made during his residence in Kingston, to introduce among the missionary brethren a system of combined action and mutual sympathy. The plan having been conceived—whether the suggestion was owing to him I do not know—of forming the baptist churches in Jamaica into an association, he was appointed provisional secretary. At a meeting held in Kingston in the month of April, 1826, the Jamaica Baptist Association was formally constituted, Knibb being chosen secretary to it. He highly appreciated the beneficial ends to which the proceedings of such a body might be made subservient, and he zealously fulfilled the duties of the office which, for a considerable period, he held.

I shall now introduce an extract from a letter to his mother, disclosing the spirit in which he conducted his pulpit labours.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Kingston, December* 28, 1825.

"When I sit down to write I scarcely know how to proceed. I feel a wish to pour out the feelings of my soul to you, and to urge on you, and on all my dear relatives and friends, the value of earnest supplications at the divine footstool, that the cause of Jesus may advance, and that your William and Mary may be faithful unto death in endeavouring to aid the triumphs of our Immanuel. O, could you but visit this benighted spot, your bowels would yearn over the thousands who are perishing for lack of knowledge, who have no kind missionary to direct them to Jesus as a solace for their woes, and a cure for their sins. There are indeed some bright and luminous spots on which the Christian can look with delight, but they seem to show more visibly the moral darkness which is felt on every side. O my beloved mother, my beloved sisters, the harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few and feeble, and death is striking some of them. Pray, I entreat you, and endeavour to persuade your friends to implore the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more labourers into his harvest. I do feel it a greater honour than I can express, that God has made such a poor sinner as I am a servant of his. Through the grace of my dear Saviour, I can say that I rejoice in being among the despised soldiers of the cross. Although you must expect that I shall fall in the combat, recollect, that, as the reformer Whitefield used to say, 'I am immortal till my work is done;' and when I have accomplished this, it will truly be delightful to go to Him who is my all, my trust."

At a later period, the active opposition to the gospel, which had been lulled a little, began to revive. In February, 1828, Knibb says to his mother, "It is rather a trying time with us here. The opposers of the gospel are very mad against us. Most of us have been summoned before the House of Assembly; but 'the Lord reigneth, let the earth rejoice.' The cause of truth is rapidly extending, and the Divine Being is visiting us with his love. Our prayer-meetings are well attended; at the one on Wednesday mornings at day-break we have from 600 to 1000 present. This is a sure sign of good. Please present our kind regards to all our friends, and tell them we most sincerely supplicate their prayers in these critical times, that we may go on our course with prudence and holy courage. Have no fears for your son; he and his are safe in the hands of a covenant-keeping God. In a short time we meet in heaven. O happy conclusion! Well may it animate us while passing through this world."

Knibb's excessive labours at Kingston and Port Royal gradually undermined his health. Having been very unwell during the summer of 1828, in the autumn he suffered so severely from an affection of the liver, that his medical attendants ordered his removal from Kingston. On the invitation of Mr. and Mrs. Burchell, he went by sea to Montego Bay, where he spent several weeks, receiving much kindness, and deriving considerable benefit. From an account of this journey which he subsequently gave to his sister Mary, I take the following extracts.

TO HIS SISTER MARY.

"I have been very ill, but God has spared my unworthy life. I long and pray, that now I am recovered, I may be more than ever devoted to God. I think I shall preach with more earnestness, and pray with more fervour that the blessed gospel may be extended, and that sinners may be converted and brought back to God. I have lately taken a voyage to the other side of the island, for the recovery of my health. During my stay my mind was cheered by the delightful prospect of usefulness which I witnessed. In every station the fields seemed white to the harvest. The kindness of the people was exceedingly great. So you see, though we have our trials, we have our pleasures too. I stopped a month at Montego Bay, where brother Burchell has a large chapel. I preached there to full 2000 persons, and many could not find room. At the morning prayer-meeting there were more than 1000 present, and in this station more than 5000 are inquiring the way to Zion. Is it not cheering? Yes, blessed Jesus, thou shalt reign! Besides this, brother Burchell has another station, where I preached to full 500 persons. On my return home I preached at a place called Rio Bueno, seventeen miles from Falmouth. It was the first time a missionary had preached there. It is surrounded by sugar estates. The house was filled, and many could not get in. In the morning I took for my text, 'This day is salvation come to this house;' and in the afternoon, 'Will ye also be his disciples?' The poor people listened with the utmost attention. Many of them had never heard the gospel before. I longed for their salvation. O that it may appear that some good has been done! On Monday morning I and brother Burchell started for Kingston; and though sometimes under a burning sun, and at others drenched with wet, it was a delightful journey. We talked of our missionary prospects, and our hearts were cheered; we talked of our trials, and sang, 'Begone, unbelief.' On Monday morning we arrived at St. Ann's, where there is a General Baptist missionary, who treated us with every kindness. It was at this place I landed on my voyage. I then preached for him. In this place three of the Wesleyan missionaries were thrust into a loathsome jail this year, for preaching the gospel. It is a horrid place; I visited it, but it made me sick. Would that British Christians could see it! One of the poor missionaries is since dead. At this place the Methodist chapel has been fired into with bullets; several went over the bed where the missionary, with his wife and children, were sleeping. I have seen the bullet-holes, and handled the bullets, and my blood thrilled through my veins at the sight. Will not God visit for these things? After visiting all the missionary stations except one, I arrived at home on Thursday morning, and found my family better than I expected—thanks to the Preserver of men. The journey was one hundred and forty miles, a great part on horseback, which, over mountains, with some very bad roads, was rather fatiguing; but this was amply compensated by the pleasing scenes through which we passed, and the triumphs of Immanuel we beheld."

The reader will recognize at once the characteristic ardour of the writer of this letter, even in his passing notice of subordinate circumstances. In truth his journey to and from Montego Bay opened quite a new field of observation to him, and presented the mission to him in a fresh aspect. He had previously no conception of the magnitude which missionary operations had reached on the north side; and while, on the one hand, his heart glowed with gratitude and joy at the sight, it began to beat high with desire to take some share in the toil. Mr. Burchell was powerfully impressed with the adaptation of Knibb to the work, and in a letter to Mr. Dyer strongly urged his appointment to some principal station. Knibb himself intimated a desire to occupy Falmouth, a station then vacant, but yielded readily to the claims of Mr. Mann, who was soon afterwards appointed to it.

All through the early part of the year 1829, Knibb was soliciting from the committee the appointment of a successor, clinging to his work, however, almost in the spirit of martyrdom. "I am still in the school," says he to Mr. Dyer, "though I am but so so; but I cannot leave it so long as I can stand, or till some help is sent. I feel more than ever a wish to spend, and be spent, in the service of God. I often think, when viewing the tomb of my dear brother, of his dying wish, 'Had I a thousand lives, I should wish to spend them in the service of God in Jamaica.'"

He continued in the same attitude until the month of July, when there came a change—not, however, by the arrival of a successor. But Knibb shall speak for himself.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston, July* 4, 1829.

"Never did I address a letter to you under more conflicting feelings than at the present time. Afflicted in body and distressed in mind, I need your sympathy, and I trust I shall have an interest in your prayers. Yesterday I resigned my school. This has not been done without many painful feelings. I strove against affliction as long as I could, in the hope that a successor would arrive, for I could not endure the thought that more than three hundred children should be left destitute of the means of instruction. . . . You will suppose that I have not taken this step without consulting my respected friend, Mr. Coultart, nor without much prayer to that gracious Being who has hitherto fixed the bounds of my habitation. Last week I received intelligence from Mr. Burchell, that a new grant had been given by the New England Corporation of £300 sterling, £100 of which was for Ridgeland, provided a missionary was there; if not, its claims were for ever to cease. No one was there, and Mr. Vaughan was hurt that this was the case, which was not much to be wondered at. At last, after much entreaty, he agreed to this, that if I was there settled by September I should have it; if not, he would do no more. . . . It appeared to us the path of duty that I should go, especially as Savanna-la-Mar and Ridgeland are now supplied at a great expense, the saving of which will be something towards my support."

Thus at length was accomplished the desirable, and, indeed, indispensable removal of this exhausted labourer for God and man, who truly says of himself that he had been "attempting too much." I will not indulge in any reflexions on the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society of that day, whose difficulties and whose motives I can fully appreciate; but it may be allowed us to rejoice together, that He who sitteth in the heavens possesses a rich variety of means for accomplishing his will.

It was not with a light heart, however, that Knibb quitted the scene of his earliest labours in Jamaica. "I do most acutely feel," says he to Mr. Dyer, on the 29th of April, "leaving my little church at Port Royal; much more than I felt at leaving England." And this fervent attachment was reciprocated. The services of his last sabbath among an affectionate people were, of course, tenderly interesting. On the Monday evening a special prayer-meeting, at which it is stated that at least two thousand persons (including nearly all the school children) were present, was held at East Queen Street Chapel (Mr. Coultart's), Kingston, to implore the divine blessing on him. "When I bade them farewell," says he, "the poor children filled the chapel with their cries." He adds—"O, I did, and do love them. May I meet them in eternity!"

It had been a matter of great anxiety with him not to leave his people in debt; and he exerted himself strenuously and successfully, in various ways, to secure this object. "I feel happy," he says to Mr. Dyer, August 4, 1829, "in leaving the people in such comfortable circumstances; and fervently pray that my successor may be much more useful than I have been. They are a kind people, and will well repay a minister's love."

For a considerable period there had existed among the missionary brethren a certain kind of dealing in slaves, which gave rise to considerable dissension in Jamaica, and not a little difference of opinion at home. A general idea of the facts will be readily derived from the following note of Dr. Ryland to Mr. Dyer, which, like many of the doctor's notes, is without date, but which cannot have been written later than 1825, which was the year of his death.

DR. RYLAND TO MR. DYER.

"*Bristol, February* 21.

"Verily I supposed I had been as much against slavery as any one, but indeed I cannot go the lengths some of our brethren are inclined to go, nor do I believe Paul would. 'Tripp bought and sold slaves!' Yes; and a good action it was. A member of the church, of whom he had a good opinion, had a wife and two children who were slaves. Their master failed, and they were seized and sent to jail, to be sold for his debts. They had not been legally married, but according to the way in which the best negroes marry, who determine to confine themselves to one wife. The man came in great distress to Tripp, fearing they would be sold away, and sent to a distance. He very earnestly begged Tripp to buy them, that they might not be parted from him. Tripp had not sufficient money, but borrowed some of Coultart, and bought them, promising the man to give them their liberty when he could repay him. The man was a good while ere he could get the money, but at last repaid Tripp, and they are free. He bought another afterwards, at his own desire, I think, but I cannot remember the particulars; but verily I could see no harm in either, and in the first case he deserved praise much more than blame."

Knibb, as will naturally be supposed, had been one of several remonstrants against the practice thus defended; and, finding the doctor's opinion to be prevalent in the Committee, he wrote on the subject as follows, on the 29th of April, 1829:—

TO MR. DYER.

"I was surprised at your remarks on the slave business, but I long for the subject to be dropped, as it has done more harm than ever the purchase of slaves will do good. It has led me to this conclusion, nor am I by any means singular in it, that whoever buys slaves in the mission family, *I* will not again interfere. I esteem brother ——, but I cannot love the traffic in human blood.

There is not a missionary on the island, who has not been engaged in it, but what condemns it; and by those of other societies it is cast on ours as a slur. I do detest and abhor slavery from the bottom of my heart; the cruelty of it is enough to make one weep tears of blood. Were it not for the hope of doing good, I would not stay on the shores cursed by slavery a day. I am fearful of becoming habituated to its horrors; sincerely do I hope I never may."

Although at this period it can scarcely be necessary, it may, perhaps, be desirable to make a few remarks, tending to show the grounds on which the class of proceedings in question were condemned.

The remonstrants found no fault with the act of purchasing a slave in order to give him his *immediate* freedom. This Knibb himself did, in a case which he thus narrates, and towards the expense of which, £34, he asks aid:—"A few weeks back a female slave. whose father was white, was seized for the debts of her late mistress, a poor free woman, and advertized to be sold in the street in which I live. Her name is Amelia Sutherland; she was received by me into the church at Stewart Town, and at the lamented death of brother Mann, took care of the chapel there. Seeing her about to be sold like a beast for no fault of her own, I procured a friend to purchase her for me, and instantly gave her her freedom."

Tripp and others bought slaves and *held* them, promising to give them their freedom only when they could repay their purchase money. The difference between the two cases is certainly not small. In the latter the purchaser became an actual slave-holder, was registered as such in the public records, identified himself with the entire mass of slave-holders in the island, and gave the sanction of his example to the whole system of traffic in the bodies and souls of men. This was bad enough, but it was not all. No security could be given that slavery would not be perpetual. The party might never be able to acquire the money; the purchaser might from time to time be unwilling to take it; or death might occur, and place this, like all other property, at the disposal of the law, or of a differently minded heir. I think there is decisive weight in these considerations, and I cannot but sustain Knibb's objections. The motives might have been good, but the judgment was not sound.

He wrote further to the committee on the subject, in the name of himself and his brethren, in the following terms :—

TO THE SAME.

"Whatever impression may be made upon your mind as to the mercy, the justice, or the goodness of motive, evinced in trafficking in human flesh, we who have seen its evils cannot credit them. We did, and do still, think that they would not have been free during the lives of the purchasers, had we not interfered; and yet it seems we are the blameable—the only blameable persons, for protesting against this iniquitous traffic. We do not, my dear sir, mention these things to grieve, either you, our brethren, or the committee; but we are pained that, while acting from the purest motives, and in conformity with your strict instructions, in opposing the purchase of our fellow creatures, it should be said that vindictive feelings have influenced us. Our correspondence is before you, and rather than lie under unmerited censure, we are willing to publish it to the world. O that God would heal the breach so unhappily existing, which has been engendered by this infernal slavery!"

The subject continued to supply materials for irritation in Jamaica throughout the years 1830 and 1831. In the latter year Knibb writes thus to Mr. Dyer :—

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, February* 3, 1831.

"Have the kindness to send me by the first packet, my letter containing the 'Correspondence on Slavery.' I entreat this as a favour, that I and my brother missionaries may be able fully to state what has passed, relative to a transaction that I shall ever think reflects upon us the highest honour. I lately heard from England, that it was publicly asserted in a chapel in London that it was a poor widow that was purchased from a cruel master! Just as true as if it had been said that it was poor Mrs. Dyer, and that she was purchased from an Algerian pirate. However, I have done; thankful that I am one of the 'officious meddlers,' and not one of the honoured and applauded traffickers in human blood. Avarice ruined your mission at Serampore: God in his great mercy grant that slave-dealing missionaries may not ruin this in the West."

One cannot but feel an interest in contemplating this incidental manifestation of that intense and inextinguishable hatred of slavery, which, like volcanic fire, was slowly preparing for its destined hour of explosion, and work of destruction.

I cannot conclude this chapter without inserting one sentence from a letter to his mother at this period. It is this:—"I do enjoy religion here, secluded from the world. Though scorned and condemned, I feel that I am the servant of Jesus, and that he will one day vindicate the characters of his missionary servants." "I DO ENJOY RELIGION." How much thankfulness the statement awakens! And how fully it reveals the secret, at once of his devotedness and of his success!

On the 14th of February, 1829, he takes the following brief retrospect of the four years he had spent on the island. "Truly I can say, goodness and mercy have followed me and mine. Though affliction has lately been my lot, I feel that these have been the pleasantest years of my existence. God has graciously blessed my endeavours to promote the best happiness of man, in connexion with his glory, and this demands a song of gratitude and praise. The state of the mission is very cheering, and abundantly compensates for all the filthy scorn cast upon us."

The last sentence in this extract relates to a matter with which we shall become better acquainted in a following chapter.

CHAPTER V.

HIS PRIVATE LIFE AT KINGSTON.

It was not as a field of labour merely that Knibb was permitted to regard Jamaica. It contained a burial place of hallowed interest to him—his brother's grave. And he suffered but a few moments to pass, ere he sought the indulgence of those tender but powerful feelings which his arrival had kindled in his bosom. "After I had refreshed myself," says he, in his letter to Mr. Fuller, "I hasted with mournful steps to the grave of our dear Thomas, with emotions which my feelings will not permit me to describe. It was, however, good to be there. May my life be spent, and my latter end be, like his! He sweetly rests till the heavens be no more, and soon my bones will be consigned to rest like his. I humbly hope to have his reward. While in the chapel the couplet was continually in my mind—

'Spirit of a brother dear,
Tell me, art thou present here?'"

His first domestic care, necessarily, was to provide himself with a habitation. Temporarily he engaged the house in which his brother had lived, but he afterwards hired a different residence. In a letter to Miss S. Griffiths he describes it in the following terms:—

"We have a very comfortable and neat house, situated in a place called Gold Street, which looks into the sea, if a street can look at all. It consist of a piazza, a front and back hall, two bed rooms, and in the yard, two negroes' rooms, a pantry, a store room, a cook house, and stable, with other convenient and necessary out-houses. We have a pomegranate and a guava tree, and I intend, as soon as I can, to have a pigeon house." To another correspondent he says,—"Though I suppose the voice of prayer has never before ascended from under its roof, I trust our God will condescend to hear ours, both for ourselves, our Christian friends, and the extension of his cause." On this habitation he entered on the 25th of March.

The season in which he arrived in Jamaica was one of extraordinary sickness and mortality. The fact struck, but did not appal him. Two short extracts from his letters will show in what a solemn, yet elevated spirit of piety he regarded it.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston, April* 16, 1825.

"Truly this is a land of disease and death. This time last year my dear brother was in the land of the living, and I feel that, perhaps before another association meets, I may be called into the presence of the Judge. But it is my consolation that the same God rules here as in England, and that he has promised that all things shall work together for the good of those who truly love Him. I believe that this is the place where God would have me be, nor would I change it for the world. Do not forget me in your prayers, that whether my existence be long or short, I may be enabled to work while time is afforded me."

TO MISS SPURRIER.

"*Kingston, October*, 1825.

"It is indeed awfully, and more than awfully sickly here now. I often think of those lines—

'Not a single shaft can hit,
Till the God of love sees fit.'

I do indeed seem conversant with the grave. It is well to be so. If I am but prepared, it matters little when the summons comes. To be able to say, 'I know that, when this earthly house of my tabernacle is dissolved, I have a house in heaven,' is of much more value than the tongue of an angel could express."

On the 8th of August, 1825, Mrs. Knibb became the mother of twins, a boy and a girl. On the following day Knibb despatched to Miss S. Griffiths a detailed, and somewhat humorous account of his feelings on this interesting occasion. The following extract may be given to the reader: —

TO MISS S. GRIFFITHS.

"I sincerely pray that nothing may occur to cast a gloom over this illustrious birth. The people are all congratulating me on my happy state, but really I feel it to be a weighty charge in every respect. O how delighted should I be, could you and my dear friends at Bristol behold them! I am foolish enough to imagine that you would feel a portion of that pleasure which animates my mind. The people here say, and a fond father can easily credit it, that a finer brace of youngsters they never saw: who they are like *I* cannot tell, but the nurse says the girl is like her mother. I hope she is, but I am no judge. We intend to call them William and Mary Ann. You will recollect that I am a twin, and my sister is named Ann. Really I begin to feel concerned for the expense. The doctor has this morning told me that I must have a wet nurse, as Mrs. K. cannot nurse both. I feel at having a black person for this purpose, but there is no remedy. However, if God is but pleased to spare them, I care not at what cost, if I am able to pay it. The doctor's charge will be, I am informed, the small sum of £27, exclusive of extra charges, which will make it £30! What with nurses and other things, I fear £100 will soon be spent. But really they are worth all; and I do feel it such a mercy that my more than ever beloved Mary is spared, that every other consideration is absorbed. I trust that my future existence will be more devoted to the service of Him who spared her in the hour of trial."

In a letter to his mother, he says,—"O that the mercy, the great mercy, in sparing both mother and children, may duly affect my heart! Bless the Lord, O my soul! They are now sweetly sleeping by the side of their mother. Would that you could behold them! The people here say they are as fine a pair of immortals as they ever beheld. O that they may inherit immortal bliss! I trust that nothing will occur to interrupt our joys, but I wish to hold all loosely."

The last thought in this extract was well and wisely entertained, for its influence was soon required. But he shall tell his own tale, as he told it to his friend Miss Spurrier, less than a month after the occurrence.

TO MISS SPURRIER.

"*Kingston, September* 13, 1825.

"We have been called to bear the yoke of affliction, and the delight of our eyes has been snatched from us by His sovereign hand who bestowed it. Our kind and wise Father has seen fit to remove our dear little girl, and she sweetly sleeps on the coffin of my much beloved Thomas. It is in much mercy that little William is spared, else we should have had sorrow upon sorrow. Though she stayed but ten days on earth, she had taken deep hold of my heart, and I keenly feel the separating stroke. When I saw them lying with their arms extended over each other by the side of their mother, I longed that you and my dear Bristol friends could behold them, and thought myself the happiest of beings; but oh, how short was the pleasing dream, the half of which is fled!

"On the 18th of August, about five in the morning, dear Mary awoke, and found the little girl in convulsions, and almost immediately afterwards the little boy was taken in the same manner. We applied everything which medical skill and the tenderest affection could suggest, but in four short hours little Mary fled to heaven, and left this world of pain and grief. For two days we could not entertain any hope that the boy would be spared, but God had mercy upon us, lest we should have had sorrow upon sorrow. On the evening of the day on which she died, the little girl was committed to the tomb. I went into the vault, and saw her placed on the coffin of my brother, where shortly, in all probability, my useless body will be laid. I hope the feelings that were excited in my mind on beholding the coffins of Kilpin and my beloved Thomas will be the means of weaning me more from this world, and of enabling me to place all my hopes on that state where sorrow never comes. But,—

'Shall Simon bear the cross alone,
And all the rest go free?
No! there's a cross for every one,
And there's a cross for me.'"

It must be evident to every reader that, during the period of which I am now writing, the amount of labour undertaken and performed by Knibb was very great. It would have been deemed so in the temperate zone, within the tropics it was altogether extraordinary. Many incidental references indicate, that, although he seems soon to have become inured to the intense heat of the climate, he felt his toil severely. On one occasion he says, that talking all the day long in the school-room produced so much soreness of the lungs, that he feared it was laying the foundation of an internal complaint; on another, he tells of the exhaustion of strength resulting from so many exertions; while he suffers from time to time slight attacks of fever. Under the influence of circumstances of this class he took two days' relaxation, at the residence of one of the deacons of the church at Port Royal, an account of which he addressed to Miss Spurrier, in a letter dated February the 19th, the year not being stated. It must, I conceive, have been 1827. Its tone of pleasantry will be refreshing.

TO MISS SPURRIER.

"*Brooks's Pen, Windward Road, Jamaica, February* 19.

"Well, here I am, wife, child, and all, in one of the oddest places under the skies, and yet, to me, filled with beauties. The owner of this humble place was once a slave, is now free, and has several slaves under his control. He is one of the deacons of the church, and has invited me here for a day or two, to see if it would 'make massa trong.' It is about eight miles from Kingston, is situated close to the sea-side, and is healthy and pleasant. The old man sent his horse and chaise for us, and we jogged on, farmer-like. I think we never looked so family-like before. The chaise was easy and old, the little horse had passed the best of his days, and the harness was none of the best; the black servant was sitting behind, and we three formed one of the oddest appearances you may ever have beheld. On one side sat poor Will, his clothes hanging on him like sacks, and his usually rosy face the colour of a sheet of paper; in the centre was the bag of necessaries, and on the other side sat good Molly, with her rosy little boy, who smiled and cheered the scene. As we trotted on we talked of Spurrier and others, and poor Mary almost 'piped him eye' at the remembrance of English excursions.

"In the evening we stood on the sea-shore, that sea which parts us from England, sat down on a canoe under the shade of an old tree, talked of Bristol friends, sang 'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,' to Hawksworth, earnestly longed for the time when it should be the case in this wicked place, and retired to our spacious apartment. At ten at night I met a few poor slaves in an old—I know not what to call it: there was a table and a chair, and an old lamp under my nose, the smell of which was horrid. Poor things, they had walked far to see me. I sang, 'Come let us join our cheerful songs,' most charmingly to a negro tune, (when I see you I will sing it you); talked to the poor things about Jesus Christ, read John to them, prayed twice with them, and sent them home. They seemed gratified; I was delighted. I meet some more about eleven to-night, and start home to-morrow morning, being Sunday, to attend to its delightful employments. I wish I could give you an idea of this grotesque establishment, but I am sure I cannot. It is a little, long, square place, with a wooden roof. In our bed-room, two hair trunks, placed on two stools, make a chest of drawers, on which stands the glass. The other room, where the man and his wife sleep, is kitchen, cellar, and all. I am now in the hall, where wife is sewing, with little Bill in her lap, sucking his fingers, full dressed in his shirt, and kicking his legs about in sportive play; around me, dogs, pigs, black children, &c. One little fellow is so frightened at buckra, that he runs away if I go near. To decorate the walls there is a likeness of their majesties, two looking-glasses, sundry other pictures, and a funnel. Before me rolls the beautiful wide spreading ocean, which wafts health to my emaciated frame. After playing a while with little Will, who holds out his mouth most sweetly to present a kiss, I will try and proceed in my wandering musings.

"I know not how it is, friend Spurrier (you know what sort of a fellow I am), but I love to think of old times, old places, and old friends. Some may think this unmanly, but at any rate it is not unlovely. Now I often picture myself in your little room, fancy the tune book, or what is better, the tea and toast, before me, with the table groaning under the fruits of the fall. I see it, and all, all seems familiar; I perhaps reading, you sewing, and talking of Humble Endeavour concerns. By the bye, when I am distressed, I hope you wo'nt forget that any little article of dress will be thankfully received. Some time or other I must send an humble petition, but while I can do without any way, I will not be burdensome; at present we have all things and abound, though I hope you will not forget that there is a poor unworthy sinner of the name of William Knibb, who is labouring in heathen lands, and who has a wife and family dependent on him for support. But enough of this. You will see I am William still, and I think I always shall be; but I know to whom I am writing, and that she will distinguish between the fondness of past remembrances and undue funniness."

His feelings as a parent appear, as in momentary glimpses, in the following passages from his letters.

TO MISS SPURRIER.

"*Kingston*, *March* 10, 1826.

"My little W. K. is sitting on the sofa by me, secured by a pillow, looking for some one to play with him, and would be glad of a visit from you. If we could send him one day and have him back the next, we would send him, but we could not spare him longer. He is a lively little fellow, just like his father; has one tooth, and another just out. I suppose it is natural for folks to talk of their children, and you see I am as foolish as the rest."

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Port Royal*, *October*, 1826.

"Little William is well, but not strong; cannot walk, but can creep. He is remarkably lively, and refreshes me after the fatigues of the day. He is very fond of riding in the chaise, and I suppose some people think I am heartily fond of him, as I take him as frequently as I can."

TO HIS BROTHER EDWARD.

"*Kingston, November*, 1826.

"I am much obliged by your kind inquiries respecting dear William, but I much fear that he will not long be my William. Till lately he has thriven remarkably well, but disease has reduced him to a skeleton, and I am afraid he has water in the head. He is now with Mary at Port Royal, for change of air, where he will be rowed on the sea every morning. God in mercy grant that it may prove beneficial! But I have little hope. I have felt, and do feel, exceedingly at parting with my only son, he is so engaging, so very so to us; but my consolation is that my Heavenly Father does not afflict me willingly, and I hope that I shall be led to say, 'Not my will, O God, but thine be done.' If he dies he will go to heaven, and there I hope to meet both him and you."

A letter to Miss Margaret Williams, dated May 26, 1827, (it has been already quoted for another purpose,) contains another domestic sketch, and is adapted to awaken gratitude, even at this distance of time, for the merciful deliverence from death which it records:—

TO MISS M. WILLIAMS.

"Well, here I am in my small house, sitting at my bookcase, where I have spent many a pleasant hour. It is a neat place, and you would love it much. It is surrounded with green jealousies. There sits Polly, rather jolly, writing to ——— ; alongside hang the Doctor and Foster. Little Will has just left for bed, I believe, saying, 'Whole School hands, A. B. C.' He is a laughing, funny fellow; talks, runs, and walks, all day long. The servants are enjoying the wet, as they have a holiday. The parrot talks well, and howls hideously; and the pigeons are seeking shelter in their houses. The rain, now and then, is pouring in torrents, and the thunder rolling. On one side is a beautiful garden of about an acre, where onions, parsley, sallad, grapes, and almost everything is growing, and on the other is the yard. I often wish that my friends could see the house, for then I should see them. We had a most merciful escape from death the other day, and I am sure that I shall never forget the mercy. I, and Mary, and Will, went for a ride in the camp: the soldiers fired, the horse took fright, the harness broke, the chaise fell on poor Mary and William, but I escaped. Through the tender mercy of God, no serious injury occurred; but Mary was much bruised, and poor William too. When I saw them under the chaise, I thought they were dead: my feelings you may conceive. If the harness had not broken, I think Mrs. K. must have been killed, as the chaise would have been pulled over her, for the horse ran a mile afterwards. I almost shudder when I think of it. The officers were very kind. We were sitting in the chaise, looking at the soldiers, when the horse took fright. May the lives thus spared be devoted exclusively to the glory of God!"

In September of this year (1827) a little girl, who was called Catherine Mary, was added to his family; Mrs. Knibb having suffered a severe attack of cholera about a week before her confinement, so that her life was scarcely hoped for. On this occasion he sings, with his usual affectionate warmth, "of mercy and of judgment." In a letter dated March, 1828, he says that Mrs. K. had been "thrice brought to the borders of the grave, by two attacks of cholera, and close on their heels the yellow fever."

It appears from a letter to his mother, that he himself also had been ill with fever. He adds, however, "God has been mercifully pleased to restore us all to health. O that it may be to praise him!"

From this view of his feelings in the paternal, let us now turn to those which he manifested in the filial and fraternal relations. Portions of two letters to his mother will afford a pleasing general illustration of these.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Port Royal, October*, 1826.

"Well, how are you all, in temporals and spirituals? I hope that our kind Heavenly Parent is still caring for you, and visiting you with tokens of his love. As to myself, I am, I hope, travelling still to Zion; Jesus is still sweet to my soul, and his service is my delight. I have lately been thinking much of heaven and heavenly enjoyments; and the humble hope of meeting my dear friends there adds pleasure to the theme.

> 'O,'tis a heaven worth dying for,
> To see a smiling God.'"

TO THE SAME.

"But it is high time to write something about family concerns. Dear Mary is pretty well, and we are truly happy in each other, which is a great mercy in this place, where all temporal pleasure is concentrated in home. Here are no fields to walk in, and few, if any, friends to visit. Dear little William grows fast; he is Knibb all over; he is very lively, and very interesting to us; it is quite a relief for me to play with him after the fatigues of the day. Dear little fellow, it is our daily petition that God may be pleased to endue him early with his grace; and I hope that our prayers will be heard. I often tell him about you all; he smiles, but knows you not. I always feel, when writing, that every letter may be the last; but O, what a mercy is a heaven of eternal rest! There, my beloved parent, I hope to meet thee, and there unite in adoring Him who redeemed us with his blood. O, he is worthy of all our souls; nor can we do too much for him who has done so much for us. Could I but hope that all of us should be there, a burden would be removed which at times presses heavily upon me. I am glad to hear that Ann has avowed the Lord to be her God; and, as I fully believe that baptism is an ordinance of God, I cannot but be pleased that she has,

> 'Fearless of the world's despising,
> The ancient path pursued.'"

In the summer of 1827 he was informed of a dangerous illness which had befallen his father, an illness which issued in death about the close of the year. This occurrence gave occasion to what I regard as one of the loveliest and the noblest manifestations of Knibb's character. His father was an irreligious man. His position, therefore, in writing of or to such a parent, was a delicate, if not a difficult one. Let the reader mark how he acquitted himself in it; and he cannot but be struck, I think, with the mingled tenderness and boldness, the combined fidelity and respect, which are displayed.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Kingston, July* 10, 1827.

"We received your letter dated April 29th, with many emotions of grief respecting the continued and alarming illness of my father. Could I indulge the hope that his pains were mitigated and his health restored, I should rejoice exceedingly. My consolation is that the Judge of the whole earth will do what is right. My fervent prayer is that, if it be consistent with my Heavenly Father's will, these afflictions may open his eyes to see the truth as it is in Jesus. Oh the blindness—the infatuation of man, that any should be found capable of rejecting that gospel which binds up the broken in heart, unravels the mysteries of Providence, and opens the gate of eternal glory. But in this instance I can do nothing but pray. If my father be yet in the land of the living, O tell him that my heart's desire and prayer for him is, that I may meet him in heaven ; but that if he continues to reject the counsel of God, I cannot, I dare not, indulge the pleasing hope. There is mercy now, if he will but seek it; there is pardon, if he will apply for it. But, O my beloved mother, this is a subject on which I cannot dwell, nor, perhaps, is it well I should.

"With respect to yourself I have no fears. I feel sure God will never leave you nor forsake you. Frequently do I look forward to our happy meeting in glory, where I trust to spend a long eternity with you. Be not cast down. God will be your support, and at last bring you off more than conqueror. You have one child in heaven, and others on the road ; O may we all arrive there at last! Should it please the Almighty to deprive you of your husband, he will prove himself the friend of the widow. And O, could I hope that he would be in glory, I should almost weep for joy ; for if heaven is secure, how little does it signify how soon we arrive there!

"Did I not fear that father would think himself slighted, I should not have written now. Truly I respect him as a kind parent, and always shall, while memory holds her seat in my heart; but the fear that he loves not Jesus cuts me to the soul. He may never hear from me again. In all probability, my dear father, you will not. Edward informs us that there is little prospect of your life. Soon will you be in the presence of that God, that Jesus, in whom you will not believe—whose word you have despised. Oh, how will you appear when you find all a reality? I shudder for you. I could, and would, cheerfully lay down my existence for your salvation, if it could avail. My father, I feel the worth of the soul, and how can I bear to think that yours is lost for ever? Blessed Jesus, prevent, O prevent it! Though at the eleventh hour, send thine Holy Spirit, and sanctify his soul! Farewell; farewell; I can write no more. O may I meet you in heaven! Forgive me this freedom."

TO THE SAME.

"*Jamaica, September* 19, 1827.

"Tell him that I feel on the threshold of eternity, and that did I not possess the hope the bible affords, I should be of all men most miserable: but that, with these cheering prospects, I could launch into the unseen world. But shall I see him there? O, my beloved father, do not shut your eyes against the truth, but examine and revere the claims of Jesus of Nazareth. God is merciful. He would be so to you, if you would accept his grace: but if you refuse, what will be your surprise, should you find that the scriptures are true, and that hell is an awful reality? O, I long for your precious, your immortal soul; and believing as I solemnly do, that all who reject Jesus Christ will be turned into despair, what would I not do might I but snatch you from the anger of an omnipotent God! You have one son in heaven, your beloved Thomas (he prayed much for you,) and, perhaps, you soon may have another. O turn to Jesus, and he will give you rest. My beloved father, pardon the affectionate solicitude of one who loves you, and whom you love. Nothing but the cause of Jesus should keep me from you; but I rejoice that I am honoured to become his servant, even in this sickly clime; and if I die in it, which I fully expect, I shall rejoice that ever I was made an ambassador for Christ."

On receiving the intelligence of his father's decease, he thus addressed himself to the consolation of his widowed mother:—

TO HIS MOTHER AND SISTER.

"*Jamaica, February* 10, 1828.

"Your letter, my dear sister, containing a brief account of my dear father's death, and of the indisposition of my beloved mother, has filled me—I may say us—with most painful feelings. In a distant land we can do little more than sympathize with each other, but all the tender sympathies of my soul are called forth on this mournful occasion. Would that I were near to pour in the balm of consolation, and to administer comfort to my more than ever beloved mother; but I am far away, a stranger in a strange land. Yet let not a mother imagine that she is forgotten by her son. No, while memory holds her seat in my heart, though my presence cannot cheer, my prayers shall ascend, that God may visit her with his loving-kindness every morning, and with his faithfulness every evening. Let not my dear mother give way to desponding feelings. Your path has been rough, but your rest will be the sweeter. Your God has promised you every needful supply, and he will be faithful to his word. Are you now in affliction? His everlasting arms of mercy shall be around you. Are you cast down? Let his promise cheer you. He will stay his rough wind in the day of his east wind."

The next chapter will conduct us to different scenes, and bring us into direct contact with the spirit of persecution.

CHAPTER VI.

REVIVAL OF HOSTILITY TO MISSIONS IN JAMAICA.

AT the period of Knibb's arrival in Jamaica, active opposition to the diffusion of the gospel in that island had somewhat abated, but another outbreak was feared. This anticipation was speedily realized. On the 22nd of December, 1826, an act called a Consolidated Slave Law, and containing several clauses restricting evangelical labour, passed the House of Assembly. Among its provisions were the following: that "slaves found guilty of preaching and teaching, as anabaptists or otherwise, without a permission from their owner and the quarter sessions for the parish, should be punished by whipping or imprisonment in the workhouse to hard labour;" "that no sectarian minister or other teacher of religion should keep open his place of meeting between sunset and sunrise;" and that "religious teachers taking money from slaves, should pay a penalty of twenty pounds for each offence, and in default of payment be committed to the common jail for a month." The law was to go into operation on the 1st of May, 1827.

However it may have arisen, all parties seem to have been disappointed by the operation of this law. Knibb, writing to Mr. Dyer on the 3rd of October, 1827, says, "The new law has not hurt us much. God is doing all his pleasure, and it is delightful to know that he is able to take the wise in their own craftiness." So far the fears of the missionaries were disappointed. Of course the hopes of the planters must have been equally so. For them, however, this was not the worst. The home government, who had been applied to by the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society on the subject, deemed it right to recommend his majesty in council to disallow the law, a step which was accordingly taken in December, 1827. The despatch from Mr. Huskisson, which accompanied the announcement of this fact, treated the persecuting clauses in so admirable a manner, and affirmed so nobly the determination of the government to maintain the great principle of religious liberty, that I have great pleasure in placing an extract from it on record in these pages:—

"Among the various subjects which this act presents for consideration, none is more important in itself, nor more interesting to every class of society in this kingdom, than the regulations on the subject of religious instruction. The 83rd and the two following clauses must be considered as an invasion of that toleration to which all his majesty's subjects, whatever may be their civil condition, are alike entitled. The prohibition of persons in a state of slavery assuming the office of religious teachers might seem a very mild restraint, or rather a fit precaution against indecorous proceedings; but, amongst some of the religious bodies who employ missionaries in Jamaica, the practice of mutual instruction is stated to be an established part of their discipline. So long as the practice is carried on in an inoffensive and peaceable manner, the distress produced by the prevention of it will be compensated by no public advantage.

"The prohibition of meetings for religious worship between sunset and sunrise will, in many cases, operate as a total prohibition, and will be felt with peculiar severity by domestic slaves inhabiting large towns, whose ordinary engagements on Sunday will not afford leisure for attendance on public worship before the evening. It is impossible to pass over without remark the invidious distinction which is made, not only between protestant dissenters and Roman catholics, but even between protestant dissenters and Jews. I have, indeed, no reason to suppose that the Jewish teachers have made any converts to their religion among the slaves, and probably, therefore, the distinction in their favour is merely nominal; still it is a preference which, in principle, ought not to be given by the legislature of a Christian country.

"The penalties denounced upon persons collecting contributions from slaves for purposes either of charity or religion, cannot but be felt, both by the teachers and by their followers, as humiliating and unjust. Such a law would affix an unmerited stigma on the religious instructor; and it prevents the slave from obeying a positive precept of the Christian religion, which he believes to be obligatory on him, and which is not inconsistent with the duties he owes to his master. The prohibition is, therefore, a gratuitous aggravation of the evils of his condition.

"It may be doubtful whether the restriction upon private meetings among the slaves, without the knowledge of the owner, was intentionally pointed at the meetings for religious worship. No objection, of course, could exist to requiring that notice should be given to the owner or manager whenever the slaves attended any such meetings; but, on the other hand, due security should be taken that the owner's authority is not improperly exerted to prevent the attendance of the slaves.

"I cannot too distinctly impress upon you, that it is the settled purpose of his majesty's government to sanction no colonial law which needlessly infringes on the religious liberty of any class of his majesty's subjects; and you will understand that you are not to assent to any bill imposing any restraint of that nature, unless a clause be inserted for suspending its operation until his majesty's pleasure shall be known."

The colonists were highly displeased by this measure. In the House of Assembly the reading of Mr. Huskisson's despatch was repeatedly interrupted by violent bursts of indignation, and public meetings were held in various parts, at which vehement resolutions were passed. In a word, the whole island was in commotion.

In these circumstances, as may well be supposed, the missionaries were very anxious. Nor were they inactive. A Christian and effective reply to the charges contained in the resolutions of the public meeting held at Kingston was published in the *Jamaica Courant*, both by the methodists and the baptists, the latter document being signed by nine missionaries, of whom Knibb was one.

The adversaries of the gospel, however, were not to be restrained. In order to effect their object, they directed a course of systematic slander against the missionaries, with a view to ruin their reputation, as a step preliminary to their destruction. Of this Knibb speaks in a letter to Mr. Dyer, of April 26, 1828, in the following terms:—"The newspapers teem with the most unblushing falsehoods against us. I am glad they are falsehoods. While we can preserve a conscience void of offence, we have little to fear from their puny, though malicious attacks. They cannot say that we do no good, so they lay it to wrong motives, and charge us with the basest designs. But 'He that sitteth in the heavens shall laugh, the Lord shall have them in derision.'" And again, under date of August 27, 1828: — "As it respects the spirit in which the present opposition to the truth is carried on, a more determined one I think seldom, if ever, existed; thank God, the power is restrained. But all that can be effected by unfounded statements and glaring falsehoods, they are daily endeavouring to accomplish. How far they may succeed time alone can discover. However, they have at last descended so low, that I expect they will defeat their own end. If Satan has any shame, I think he must be ashamed of his agents here. Not the least regard to truth is maintained, but whatever falsehoods any luckless wight sees fit to send are promulgated with every mark of satisfaction."

The same subject is thus further noticed in a letter to his mother, dated September 9, 1828: —

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*September* 9, 1828.

"The public papers are filled with the most abominable falsehoods against us, and every means is employed to render us odious. We are called liars, pickpockets, vagabonds, scoundrels, and every name of reproach that malice can invent. Since his majesty's government have declared that they will protect us, the devil has come down with great wrath. Two missionaries have been imprisoned in a loathsome jail, and how soon I may be in one I know not.

"A week or two ago, some one informed the magistrates of Port Royal that I called them a set of lying scoundrels, and that I had said I did not care for them, that they might do what they liked. They formed a quarter sessions, and, after much angry talk, agreed that I should not preach till I had taken the oaths of allegiance. The senior magistrate, who was my friend, told me he entered his protest against the proceedings in open court, saying, 'It is the most ungentlemanly action I ever knew. Mr. Knibb has conducted himself as a gentleman and a Christian.'

"These proceedings partly arose from the following circumstance. Mr. Marshall, a member of Assembly, and a magistrate of another parish, asserted at a public meeting that we baptized persons naked, and this was printed as a charge against us. The next sabbath my chapel was full; many of the inhabitants were present whom I had never seen before, and have never seen since. It was collection day, and before it was gathered I spoke as follows:—'As there are several respectable persons present who are not in the habit of attending the chapel, I cannot ask them for anything without contradicting the statement made in yesterday's paper. Did it relate to myself individually, I should treat it with contempt; but it is a libel on the respectable denomination to which I belong, and I should think myself unworthy of the character of a missionary, if through fear of men I was afraid to contradict it. I now say that it is a wilful falsehood, and that, if Mr. Marshall did say it, he is a liar. A more indecent and abominable charge was never brought against any body of Christians. If believed, it must sink us into contempt.'

"The senior magistrate sent for me the day after the quarter sessions, and said he was exceedingly sorry for what had happened, but he hoped that it would soon blow over. I asked him, after some conversation, who my accusers were, and found that they were unworthy of notice. I said, 'Is it the intention of the magistrates to stop me from preaching until the next sessions?' 'Yes, I believe it is. What do you intend to do?' 'Sir,' I said, 'I never have spoken a word disrepectfully of any of the magistrates, except in the above instance, and that I should do again, whoever it might be. I have applied to you, more than once, to take these oaths, and am now ready to take them. As you have been friendly, I should be sorry to hurt your feelings; but I cannot attend to this injunction. I am sent here to preach, and preach I must, and shall, and take the consequences. The magistrates have no power to stop me. If they have any charges against me, let them bring me to trial; but I cannot violate my conscience, or neglect my duty.' He said he did not wish me to do so; and after about an hour's chat, I left him. When I thanked him for his kindness, he said, 'I always have been your friend, and I hope you will still consider me such.'"

"This was on Saturday morning. Having to preach at Kingston on sabbath morning, I came up directly in a canoe, and in the evening I received the following letter:—

"'*Peace Office, Port Royal, August* 29.

"'SIR,—At a court of quarter sessions this day held, the bench of justices were unanimously of opinion, that it was the duty of the dissenting clergymen officiating in the parish to comply with the laws, and that they were not to go on preaching, without qualifying, and obtaining licences; which the court REQUIRED them to do forthwith, and directed me to intimate such their resolution and requisition to you. I beg the favour of an acknowledgment of the receipt of this letter.

"'(Signed) "'P. W. CLEMENT, *Clerk of the Peace.*'

"I went down and preached on the sabbath evening. Many came out of curiosity, and the chapel was crowded. I took for my text, 'Be not deceived, God is not mocked.' On Monday I wrote the following reply to the Clerk of the Peace:—

"'*School Room, September* 1, 1828.

"'SIR,—I received yours, containing the sentiments of the magistrates assembled in Port Royal on the 29th of August, respecting the dissenting clergymen officiating there. I believe the magistrates are aware that I have more than once, to the resident magistrate, expressed my willingness to take the usual oaths whenever it might be required.

"'Having received an intimation that it is practicable, you will oblige me by convening a special court, at any time that may be convenient to the gentlemen concerned; and on being informed of the time of meeting, I shall not fail to present myself for the purpose of taking the oaths by law appointed.

"'As I have reason to believe that charges have been brought against me which are unfounded, you will much oblige me by furnishing me with a copy of the proceedings of the court that refer to myself.

"'I am, Sir,
"'Yours with respect,
"'W. KNIBB.'

"To this I have had no reply. I know not what they will do, nor does it much signify. They are enraged at our success, but in vain do they try to oppose it."

Supported by their artillery of calumny, the colonists returned to the charge. The House of Assembly re-enacted the Consolidated Slave Law without alteration, and coolly presented it to Sir John Keane, then governor of Jamaica, for his sanction—which, however, he most honourably refused. Determined not to be foiled, they then appointed a committee, subsequently well known as the Sectarian Committee, "to inquire into the establishment and proceedings of sectarians in the island." After examining various witnesses, among whom were some of the baptist missionaries, this committee brought up a report to the following effect—that the principal object of the sectarians was to extort money from their congregations on every possible pretext, and by the most indecent expedients; that they inculcated the doctrines of equality and the rights of man, and preached and taught sedition, even from the pulpit; that they occasioned abject poverty, loss of comfort, and discontent, among the slaves frequenting their chapels, and deterioration of property to their masters; and that, with an infamous thirst for gain, they recommended females to prostitute themselves in order to get money for contribution. The House did not content themselves with transmitting this document to the home government. They forwarded it also, in large quantities, to the island agent in England, with a view to its extensive distribution through the mother country.

This blow against the missionaries was undoubtedly well conceived, and well aimed. It was obviously intended to destroy their character with the British public, and so to prepare the way for the enactment of severe measures. Nor was it unnatural, perhaps, for men of such habits and experience as those who composed the Jamaica House of Assembly, to expect that a grave official document, got up and issued with such imposing formalities, should have a great, if not a decisive effect. The alarm produced by it in Jamaica was very great, and the parties assailed took strenuous measures for their defence. A spirited reply to it, with the siguatures of eight missionaries, of whom William Knibb was one, was published in the *Jamaica Watchman* of December 27, 1828; but I decline the insertion of this document here, in order to exhibit by his own correspondence the man whom it is my duty to portray.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Kingston, December* 30, 1828.

"The committee appointed to examine into our conduct are as violently opposed to religion as their master could desire. They say they are determined to make out a case against us, and for this purpose they are procuring witnesses of a similar description to those employed against the Redeemer. What the end of these secret councils will be we know not, but, with Satan at their head, we have cause for fear. As there is not the least doubt but they will send home all the falsehoods and garbled statements their malicious ingenuity can invent, it is at the request of those of the missionaries I have seen that I inform you, and wish the committee to inform the Christian world, if necessary, that we are fully prepared to answer, and to refute, any charge that may be brought against us. We can appeal to our enemies, and challenge them to prove fairly any of their wicked and malicious assertions; and, if needful, we can procure the affidavits of more than 5000 witnesses, that we have never extorted money, or money's worth, from any of our members, whether bond or free. We do earnestly hope that our friends in England will wrestle with God on our behalf, and that the friends of religious liberty will use all their efforts to prevent our falling the innocent victims of oppression. Here we expect nothing but injustice, but we look with confidence to the government at home, and hope we shall be heard in our defence ere our proceedings are condemned. Above all we look to Him who has hitherto been our guard, assured that the wrath of man shall praise him, while the remainder he will restrain. We are not dismayed, but our cry to you is, Pray for us."

The active interposition thus anxiously entreated, although promptly rendered, was nevertheless unnecessary. The House of Assembly had overshot the mark. The report of the Sectarian Committee was found so unsuitable to the latitude of England, that it was prudently withheld from the public eye by the party entrusted with its circulation; its incredible calumnies, consequently, fell harmless to the ground. The extravagance of its allegations produced a revulsion even in Jamaica itself. A part of the island press* denounced it as an act of "unprincipled hostility," supported by subornation of witnesses. Its authors themselves became ashamed of it, and when the bill which it was intended to sustain was actually brought forward, several of them voted in the negative. The Consolidated Slave Law, however, was passed unaltered a third time; although now by only a small majority, and only on the extraordinary assurance of a single member that *he knew* it would at length receive the sanction of the crown. The act, nevertheless, was again disallowed, and was finally passed by the House of Assembly without the persecuting clauses.

The compelled omission of these clauses, however, was far from either allaying or disarming the hostility of the colonists. Although they could not obtain the sanction of a persecuting law such as they wished, there were yet many persecuting clauses in laws which had long existed, and they began to work with such instruments as they had. Knibb had his full share of their hostility, and a case early occurred in his experience highly characteristic of both parties. It is the case familiarly known as that of Sam Swiney, and will be best introduced by the following extract:—

---

* The *Montego Bay Gazette*.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Savanna-la-Mar, April* 26, 1830.

"An excellent young man of the name of Sam Swiney, a deacon of my church in this place, is now in chains for his love to Jesus. During my sickness he and others, both bond and free, met at my house to pray. Information of this was carried to the magistrates; and though I procured three respectable persons, neighbours, including the head constable, to prove on oath that no noise was made, which the informer had sworn to, the poor fellow was convicted. The magistrate would have it that preaching and praying were the same. I tried to convince him of the difference, but it was of no use; so for offering a prayer to God, and nothing more, this poor fellow is sentenced to receive twenty lashes on his bare back, and to be worked in chains on the roads for a fortnight. I did all I could to save him, and so did his owner, a respectable gentleman of colour (Mr. Aaron Deleon), who told the magistrates that he had his permission. Next morning I went to see him flogged, determined to support him as well as I could, however painful to my feelings. There he was, a respectable tradesman though a slave, stretched indecently on the ground, held firmly down by four slaves, two at his hands and two at his feet. The driver was merciful, or every lash would have fetched blood. 'Oh, what have I done?' was the only exclamation that escaped from his lips, accompanied by a moan extorted by the pain. He was raised from the ground, chained to a convict, and immediately sent to work. I walked by his side down the whole bay, to the no small annoyance of his persecutors. Amidst them I took him by the hand, told him to be of good cheer, and said, loud enough for them all to hear, 'Sam, whatever you want, send to me and you shall have it.' The good people here have behaved nobly to him, encouraging him by every means in their power; I shall see that he wants for nothing, and by my public notice of him show that I consider him a persecuted Christian."

Knibb immediately published in one of the papers of the island (the *Struggler*) an account of this transaction, then a piece of unheard-of daring, for which he was threatened with a prosecution for libel. The affair, however, excited so much sympathy in England, that a sum of money was promptly raised—"by friends at Camberwell and other places"—for the purchase of Sam Swiney's freedom. Referring to this subject to his mother, Knibb says, "Reproach and falsehood are plentifully bestowed upon me; but these, from their frequency, have long ceased to affect me. I procured the man's freedom, which was worth all."

This, however, was not the only fruit of his interposition. Mr. Dyer forwarded the extract above given to Sir George Murray, then secretary of state for the colonies, and he in his turn forwarded it to Lord Belmore, then governor of Jamaica, for an investigation of the facts. After a protracted correspondence, which Lord Goodrich, who had succeeded Sir George Murray in the colonial office, conducted with exemplary firmness, this minister directed the dismissal from office of the two magistrates who had awarded the punishment, on the ground of an illegal decision and a gross abuse of power. The despatch conveying this intelligence is dated the 15th of November, 1831. It arrived, consequently, at what the reader will hereafter find to be a very critical period, and contributed, no doubt, to inflame the fierce resentments of the following year.

In the earlier part of these hostile proceedings several of the brethren were summoned to appear before the House of Assembly. The course adopted by the House towards them was full of menace; "but," says Knibb, "it came to nothing." And he goes on to say—"Thanks be to God, NOTHING shall be inscribed on all the attempts of the devil and his agents to obstruct the gospel in its glorious and triumphant progress. Christ '*must* increase.' This cheers our hearts. They asked one of us, 'Are you a Baptist?' 'Yes, gentlemen, I am, and I glory in the name.' Brother Tinson narrowly escaped being sent to jail; but I think they have been taught such a lesson, that they will not send for us again."

The state of mind cherished by the missionaries during the course of these proceedings was characterized by holy ardour and courage. The following glimpse of it appears in Knibb's correspondence. On the 1st of June he says to Mr. Dyer, "With your approbation I am determined not to obey the slave law, if it passes. Let me have your opinion. . . . The methodists are determined not to abide by the law. Will you, sir, say, Do likewise? If so, you have missionaries who will act."

And as the spirit of the labourers was undaunted, so was the success of their labours uninterrupted. At this period Knibb wrote to Mr. Dyer in the following terms:—"Notwithstanding all opposition, the work is proceeding gloriously. 'The fields are white to the harvest.' Thousands are flocking to hear the word of God, and great numbers are joining themselves to the Lord. We are persecuted, but not in despair. Were we such characters as we are represented to be, God would not thus bless us. We feel that we are innocent, and that we have the approval of Heaven. We behold poor sinners flocking to the standard of the Saviour; and herein we do rejoice, yea, and will rejoice. No man shall stop us of this boasting, in all the regions of Jamaica. O that God would raise up other labourers! What an honour to be employed thus! Pray for me, and for all my fellow labourers, that we may be faithful unto death."

CHAPTER VII.

FROM HIS SETTLEMENT AT SAVANNA-LA-MAR TO HIS REMOVAL TO FALMOUTH.

I HAVE stated in the sixth chapter that Knibb removed from Kingston in the autumn of 1838, to Savanna-la-Mar and Ridgeland; the former a considerable town in the south-west part of the island of Jamaica, and the latter a rural spot about twelve miles distant from it. After making and carrying out the arrangements necessary for the removal of his family, he entered on his duties here in his accustomed spirit. "The station to which I am sent," says he to Mr. Dyer, "is truly important. It is untrodden ground. Difficulties I anticipate; but I also expect help from above. May I entreat an interest in your prayers, that I may be the humble instrument of raising a church of Christ in this benighted part of the island?" The following sketch of his position occurs in a letter, dated September 4, 1828:—"My morning congregation on the Bay is already between three and four hundred, and there appears every probability that it will increase at Ridgeland. I preach at each every other sabbath, and I expect to procure a week-day station in the mountains, where I intend to reside in the sickly months. Savanna-la-Mar is all lagoon, morass, and water. The vale is thirty miles in extent; it is very warm in the day, but cool in the evenings. The thunder is terrific. It is now thundering with awful majesty. Some time since a flash of lightning broke twenty-eight panes of glass in the house where I am writing. But if I say much more you will never come. The scenery, however, is delightful, and the hills healthy."

On the 30th of January, 1829, he thus addresses Mr. Dyer:—

TO MR. DYER.

"Here, amidst some discouragements, I have much, very much to encourage me. The few united in church-fellowship are walking together in love. One of those recently baptized, a respectable female of colour, has been severely tried, and I have been delighted and encouraged by beholding her Christian resignation to the will of God. Within a few days she was to all appearance on the borders of eternity, and her hopes were fixed on Christ. No sooner was she partially restored to health, than she heard that her brother had died suddenly, and that her eldest son had been drowned. Religion did appear then in all its loveliness, and the balm of consolation was poured into her agonized heart. She is a trophy of divine grace; and, had no other good been effected, your society would have cause to bless God that you had sent his word to this place. But good is still effecting, and the gospel is still the power of God. Satan is obliged to sound a retreat in this strong-hold, and some of his victims have already approached the sceptre of mercy, have touched, and lived."

Again, in a letter, dated Falmouth, on the 1st of June, he writes as follows:—

TO THE SAME.

"Though the spirit of persecution rages in Savanna-la-Mar, the cause is triumphing gloriously. I mentioned in a late communication that I hoped to purchase the premises here. I have negotiated in part for the purchase, for £1,000. Under your present distress I cannot ask for anything by way of help. Be assured that, if I can raise the money, it will afford me much more pleasure than if it was given by the society, as it will enable them to send help where so many are perishing for lack of knowledge. I have had the whole thrown into the chapel, and even now it will not contain the numbers that attend. The chapel measures sixty-four feet by thirty-seven—just about the size of Spanish Town. There are about two and half acres of land fenced in, containing room to build a large chapel without disturbing the present one."

This extract presents Knibb to us for the first time in the attitude of purchasing land for the erection of chapels, and other mission premises. It was a zealous and energetic course, on which he seems to have entered without scruple, and which, as the sequel will show, he carried to a great extent.

It was during this period that an arrangement was entered into with his nearest brethren, Burchell, Mann, and Cantlow, to hold a quarterly meeting at their respective stations, for the purpose of promoting a spirit of prayer and co-operation among their people. The first meeting was held at Montego Bay, at the close of January, 1830, and was (to use his own words) "delightfully interesting."

He would have continued to labour at Savanna-la-Mar, had it not been for a painful dispensation of Divine Providence, which brought about the termination of his duties there at a very early period.

On the 17th of February, 1830, Mr. Mann, who had been settled at Falmouth, fell a victim to an attack of fever, after a short but very successful term of labour. This event re-opened a prospect which Knibb had previously contemplated with pleasure, and his path was made clear by the desires of the bereaved church being fixed upon him. His election to the pastoral office at Falmouth was accompanied by an extraordinary manifestation of feeling, at once highly characteristic of the warm affections which distinguish the African races, and honourable to that servant of God towards whom they were so fervently directed. The following interesting account of this proceeding is given by Mr. Burchell:—

"I called a church meeting," says Mr. Burchell, "when between four and five hundred members were present, special prayer meetings having been previously held. At this meeting I endeavoured to impress on their minds the importance of being influenced by pure motives; and having addressed them in as conscientious a manner as I possibly could, I proposed Mr. Knibb, and requested a show of hands. I never saw such a scene. The whole church, to an individual, simultaneously *rose and held up both hands, and then burst into tears!* My feelings were overcome, and I wept with them. This, I said, is truly the Lord's doing. Such a feeling I never witnessed before. Had you and the committee been present, I think you would have said the path of Providence was clear and plain, and would have said to brother Knibb, 'Go thou, and the Lord be with thee.'"

Although Knibb felt it his duty promptly to respond to a call so loud, he at the same time separated himself from his charge at Savanna-la-Mar with sincere regret. Having paid them a visit a few months subsequently to his removal, he thus writes of their state:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth*, *Sept.* 3, 1830.

"I was very fearful I should find the people careless and scattered, as they have been so long without the means of grace. In this, however, I have been agreeably disappointed. An earnest concern is manifested by the members generally for their souls; and though they mourn the absence of their minister, they meet together for prayer, hoping that you will soon pity their destitute condition, and send them one who will break to them the bread of life. Last sabbath the chapel was crowded; we had four services; and the spirit of love and humility appeared to reign in the hearts of the people. They are exceedingly kind, and I do keenly feel that we cannot afford them a more constant supply of the means of grace."

During his residence at Savanna-la-Mar, namely, on the 5th of January, 1830, a little girl was added to his family, who was called Ann Elizabeth. In communicating this intelligence to his mother, he says:—"Catherine is now climbing on my knee, a fat chubby lass, whom I should much like to show you. William is well, and with the exception of a sore throat, my health is very good. My family is now increasing, and begins to demand my care; I have three on earth, and one in heaven. O for grace to train those on earth in the nurture and admonition of the Lord!"

From the same letter I take the following extract, illustrative of his devotional feelings at this period.

> "So much for time, now for eternity. Another year has beamed upon us—perhaps our dying one. Time is fast hastening to its consummation with respect to us. Well, these fleeting years
>
> "'Will waft us sooner o'er
> This life's tempestuous sea;
> Soon we shall reach the peaceful shore
> Of blest eternity.'
>
> As you remark, we cannot anticipate a meeting on earth; it may be granted, but I do not expect it. Come, then, religion, with thy cheering aid! Light the lamp of faith in our hearts, that we may both be able to say,—'Though the earthly house of our tabernacle be dissolved, we have a building of God, eternal, in the heavens.' There, my beloved mother, I meet you; there I expect to greet you; there, through the blood of the Lamb, I hope with you to spend a long eternity. Pray for me, that I may work for God, live to God, and die to be with God. O blessed, blessed thought—
>
> "'There shall we see his face,
> And never, never sin.'"

To this may be added the following lines from a letter to Mr. Dyer: "Give me an interest in your prayers, that I may be kept humble, holy, and active. Nothing do I dread more than being a cumberer of the ground. While endeavouring to promote the cause of the Redeemer I feel he is with me; I trust he will accept my unworthy labours, and at last receive me alone through the merits of his death."

CHAPTER VIII.

FROM HIS SETTLEMENT AT FALMOUTH TO THE INSURRECTION.

Knibb was now in what he aptly designates "the garden of missionary labour," and he saw the gospel making rapid progress in various parts of it. At the period of his removal to Falmouth, a negotiation, which was shortly afterwards completed, was already on foot for the purchase of premises in that town. He quickly enlarged the chapel, and built a baptistery. His labours were abundant, not to say excessive. He implored help; and to enforce his prayer he thus describes his toils: —

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, June* 30, 1830.

"The stations here are so numerous, and so far apart, that I know not how to supply my portion of them. Do, I beseech you, if you can, speedily send us help, or I fear you will hear that some of us are numbered with the dead. Only with a desire for help, I give you a statement of my weekly work; not, my dear Sir, with any boasting, for I wish no other eye to see it but your own. Sabbath, three services, with the whole of the singing, &c. Tuesday, to Oxford or Cambridge, eight miles. Wednesday, to Rio Bueno or Arcadia, fourteen miles. Thursday, back to Falmouth, fourteen miles, to preach in the evening. Saturday to Stewart Town, eighteen miles, or some other distant place, for the sabbath. This every week, with hearing experiences, correcting disorders in the church, baptisms, &c., is too much for one. Connected with the stations are more than 5000 persons; and I feel an awful responsibility. I long to establish a sabbath school, but I cannot; for now, from six in the morning till three in the afternoon, I have scarcely a moment's rest. In addition to this I have to take my turn in Westmorland, which is eighty-six miles from the other extremity of my stations. The expenses, too, I am necessarily incurring, distress me; for with my large family, and almost continual travelling, I can scarcely live on the sum I draw for. Take, my dear Sir, these things into consideration, and send us help if you can. Surely young men could be found who would come. I hope the spirit of brother Mann will fall on some in England, so that they will say, 'Here am I, send me.' We know that missionaries soon die, and that frequently in this island their work is soon accomplished; but in so delightful a cause, even death is gain, nor will the rest be less sweet because sooner enjoyed. When I hear of persons being afraid to come hither, I often think of my dear brother's dying words—'Had I a thousand lives, I'd gladly spend them all, and sacrifice them all, for the good of the perishing negroes in Jamaica.' True, brother Mann is gone, but the good he accomplished lives. During the last year of his ministry he was eminently blessed, three hundred having been added to his church. O that the Lord of the harvest would raise up and send us some, breathing his spirit, and animated with his zeal, to supply the vacant stations!"

On the third of September he sends to Mr. Dyer the following account of the stations at Stewart Town and Rio Bueno:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Savanna-la-Mar, September* 3, 1830.

"It would be a source of much pleasure to you, could you behold the gradual spread of the gospel at Stewart Town, and at its sister station, Rio Bueno. Though they can be but seldom visited, the Lord crowns the exertions made with his abundant blessing. I visit Stewart Town every four weeks; Rio Bueno principally on the week days. Each time I have been at Stewart Town I have had the pleasure of receiving some into the church by baptism. During the last four months ninety-four persons have been thus added to the church; and it was peculiarly gratifying to me on one occasion, to administer the sacred ordinance to sixteen respectable persons of colour, most of whom were related to each other. One of the persons baptized was a young man who lately lost his sight by lightning, and brother Nichols was peculiarly interested in his simple statement of the work of grace upon his heart. Though he lives several miles from the chapel, and is totally blind, he is always to be seen among the first who come; and let the weather be ever so bad, I have never missed him. The pleasure I felt in receiving these friends of Jesus into his church below, has not been diminished by any of the members walking disorderly. They appear to have imbibed the spirit of Jesus, and most fervently do I pray that they may be kept through faith unto eternal life."

This account is followed by the announcement, now becoming characteristic, that "very eligible premises had offered at Rio Bueno, and that, "notwithstanding his many difficulties," he had "agreed to purchase them." He adds, "Here I must soon build a chapel." Land had been already bought at Stewart Town. On the 26th of October he states his pecuniary responsibilities, on account of Falmouth chapel, Stewart Town, and Rio Bueno, at the sum of £2,180; and he adds, "Perhaps you will think me wrong in entering into such heavy engagements; you would, however, I think, have done the same under similar circumstances."

About this period he addresses a letter of some length to his mother, containing a pleasing general sketch of the scene of his labours, and an equally pleasing exhibition of the spirit of the labourer. The letter was written on his birth-day, and during his visit to Savanna-la-Mar.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Savanna-la-Mar, September* 7, 1830.

"Through many scenes have we passed, since this day last year reminded me that another year of my existence had passed away, and since you were reminded that this was the natal day of your son William. Where my mother is I know not, or how; but this I know, that God is with her, and that his smiles will cheer her heart. Happy would your son be, could he be the stay and support of your declining years, but God in his providence has otherwise disposed of him; yet his prayers ascend, his wishes rise, and his heart beats freely the sentiments of love for his long absent mother. Distance chills not the current of affection; time wears not away fond memory's scenes. Still the look, the countenance, the every thing connected with *home*, is as vivid as ever.

"Here I am, a wanderer on this sun-burnt coast, travelling to and fro, without a settled resting place; but looking, I hope, for one above, and inviting others to join me in the same glorious pursuit. This morning I have made a solemn dedication of myself to the service of God, and implored the help of his Holy Spirit to assist me in living to the glory of my Heavenly Father. During the past year I have travelled about 4000 miles, in my endeavours to do good; and God has, in great condescension, been pleased to bless my labours of love. During the last four months, I have had the happiness to receive two hundred and fifty into the churches under my care, by baptism. The chapels are crowded to excess, and the great Lord of the harvest is gathering souls to himself, and is pouring out of his Holy Spirit. I have now regularly to supply six places, besides occasional labours. Sometimes I am overcome with fatigue, and pant for help. Often, while under a burning sun, do I sigh—'The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are very few!' Ask the friends of missions to pray the Lord of the harvest, that he would send forth more labourers into his harvest. Since dear brother Mann's death, a Wesleyan missionary has fallen in the field. O, what numbers have died since I landed here! Soon my turn will come. But here death is gain. As a poor hell-deserving sinner I stand, willing to live or die, as best shall please my God. Yes, Lord, take me, and do with me, as seemeth good in thy sight. But O 'take not thy Holy Spirit from me!'

"For your information, I shall give you some account of the stations under my care, commencing with Falmouth, which is the chief:—

"*Falmouth.* This is a pleasant, fashionable sea-port town, one hundred miles from Kingston. I should think it contains from 2000 to 3000 inhabitants. It is surrounded by sugar estates. The parish contains about 27,000 slaves. Here we have a pleasing church of 700 members, and about 2000 or more inquirers—that is, persons professedly seeking after the one thing needful. I have purchased a large house with land here, for £1000, which I have to collect. The chapel is sixty-two feet, by thirty-seven. I preach here every other sabbath, when it is crowded to excess; many go away for want of a place to stand. Here I hope, if spared, to build a chapel about the size of Mr. Toller's, or rather larger. During the last four months, more than one hundred have been added to the church by baptism.

"*Stewart Town.* This is a pretty little village in the mountains, about eighteen or twenty miles from Falmouth. Here we have a pretty chapel, with land, and I have to raise £450 to pay off the debt. To this church about forty or fifty have been added by baptism. I preach here once every fourth sabbath. The chapel is always crowded; the last time but one I was there 200 persons could not get in. A brother missionary being with me, he preached in the chapel, and I on a stone outside. Here we have more than 100 members, and about 600 inquirers.

"*Rio Bueno.* This is a small sea-port town, sixteen miles from Falmouth, and eighty-four from Kingston. Here I preach nearly every week, in the evening, and once every fourth sabbath, unless called elsewhere. I have agreed to purchase a large house, beautifully situated, for which I am to pay £450. The spirit of hearing at this place is delightful. Between fifty and sixty have been added to the church by baptism. Number of members, 130; inquirers nearly 1000.

"I preach on Oxford estate, eight miles from Falmouth, every other Tuesday; on Cambridge estate,* six miles from Falmouth, every other Friday; and on Arcadia estate, every Thursday; generally at Rio Bueno on Wednesday, and at Falmouth as often as I can. To God be all the glory! O for more piety, more zeal, more devotedness to God! Ever may I feel, that if I am saved, it must be by 'great and sovereign grace.' Thus, dear mother, have I told you a little of my labours, successes, and prospects. My trials you need not know; they are but few, and are, I hope, sanctified."

---

* Edward Barrett, Esq., the proprietor of these estates, resided in England; but being desirous that his slaves should receive religious instruction under the most favourable circumstances, he directed his agents to afford Knibb their direct sanction. This was far from working as he intended it. The immorality unblushingly practised and countenanced by these men did more to counteract his preaching than their patronage could do to aid it. Finding that, in these circumstances, he could do no good, while he ran the risk of doing much harm, he suspended his labours, and corresponded with Mr. Barrett on the subject. It is gratifying to be able to say that this gentleman concurred in the suggestions offered, and that his estates were among those most largely blessed by evangelical instruction.

His plea for help was enforced at the beginning of the year 1831 by the weak state of his health, on which severe inroads had been made. Thus he writes to Mr. Dyer on the 1st of January:—"At the expense of two severe attacks of sickness and a cost which I fear you will think heavy, I have during the last year, to the best of my ability, attended to the stations here. Till a helper is found (and I hope one is near) I shall still continue so to do, should God spare me. My strength is so reduced, that if this be long delayed, I fear a widow and three orphans will painfully convince you that I have fallen in the service."

When some relief was afforded him by the accession of Mr. Whitehorne to the mission, he turned it to account in the following manner:—"I expect that brother Whitehorne will take Stewart Town and Rio Bueno, so that I shall have time to make a fresh attack upon the kingdom of Satan. When you learn that there are yet 20,000 slaves without any instruction in this parish alone, you will see there is room. I am negotiating for a piece of land in the interior of the parish, surrounded by 10,000 slaves at least, and hope to obtain it. I must get the land very quietly, for if the proprietors who have land in the neighbourhood knew of my wishing for it, they would buy it, cost what it might; and it is the only place I can procure.

He was, however, all this while, as he had been at Kingston, "attempting too much;" and on the 12th of April he was obliged to write in the following strain:—"Indeed I am not able. I have had a severe attack of my old complaint, which for the last four years has generally paid me a visit at this season. I feel very weak, but pray that I may glorify God, whether by life or death. I must, I fear, try a change of air, if I can get my station supplied for a few weeks; perhaps to Kingston, or to Port Royal."

The design thus announced was put into early execution, although scarcely with the anticipated advantage, as appears from the following extract of a letter to his mother.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Falmouth, May* 23, 1831.

"I am not quite so well in health as usual, but a long journey to and from Kingston is, I suppose, the cause. I there sat mournfully on dear Thomas's tomb, and thought of him, of you, and of heaven. I do not know that I ever felt his death more than on the following sabbath, when I went into the pulpit, after an absence of nearly two years, to preach in the chapel where his remains are mouldering. Well, we shall see him again.

"Several of our brethren are leaving, and have left the island, for ill health, &c.; this throws a very heavy and laborious task on those who are left. Though I am weak, I cannot hold out any hope of your seeing me. No; while health is in any measure given, here I must remain."

The state of his health gradually became worse, and in the course of the summer he was, as he says to Mr. Dyer on the 27th of September, "very ill." Of his feelings at this period an interesting glimpse is afforded by the following short citation from one of his letters:—"I may be going to my grave, but that matters little. I have a well-founded hope in the blood of Jesus; there, there is all my trust, and, blessed be God, it is an unfailing trust. I feel more and more my own unworthiness, and the necessity of an interest in the atonement. 'Here,' (as my dear brother exclaimed with his dying breath,) 'here is solid rock, all is sea beside.'"

From this illness he was mercifully restored—to use his own words, "fully restored to health." "I believe my affliction," he adds, "has been sanctified. I am thankful for it. And most earnestly do I desire to devote more fully my remaining days to the glory of God."

In a letter dated the 7th of November, in this year, he thus expresses his feelings on a retrospect of seven years. "It is now seven years since I left the shores of Britain as a missionary in connexion with the society; and, though during this period I have had to sing of judgment as well as of mercy, yet with a grateful heart would I record the faithfulness and the loving-kindness of my Heavenly Father. Hitherto he hath helped me, and none of his promises have failed."

Our narrative of evangelical labours and successes must here be suspended for a time, in order to give some account of that extraordinary exhibition of colonial rancour and frenzy, known in the annals of Jamaica as the insurrection of 1831 and 1832.

CHAPTER IX.

THE INSURRECTION.

On the 15th of April, 1831, Mr. Fowell Buxton brought forward in the House of Commons a motion relating to British colonial slavery, and upon this occasion his majesty's ministers, although not accepting the terms of Mr. Buxton's motion, announced their fixed determination to take up the subject of it, and to redeem the pledges which had been given by the cabinet and parliament in 1823.

When this became known to the planters of Jamaica, they had recourse to their usual mode of defeating the benevolent intentions of the British government. They raised a clamour against the measures proposed, and wrought themselves up to a high pitch of excitement. During the months of July, August, and September, public meetings were held in the several parishes of the island, and speeches were made and resolutions passed, of which, without employing any characteristic epithet, I submit the following specimens :—A statement made in the House of Commons by Dr. Lushington was called "unfounded and treasonable," a declaration in the same place was said to "bespeak insanity," certain measures of the government were affirmed to be "unjust and inhuman, and" the allegations of the anti-slavery party were stigmatized as "the false and infamous representations of interested and infuriated lunatics." The planters declared that "perfidy and determined oppression, as far as regards the colonies, were the ruling principles of the British cabinet;" that now, "betrayed, and devoted to ruin and slaughter," they considered that they were "bound, by every principle, human and divine, to resist;" that, "although they might be too weak to prevail, they might prove powerful enough to injure their oppressors;" that, "if they must fall, they would at least perish with honour, as a people not insensible to glory and reputation;" that they "required to be absolved from their allegiance;" and that "the government and people of England" ought not to "endeavour by their acts and treasonable language to excite the slaves to rise up in rebellion, and rob them (the planters) of their property and lives."

I have quoted these expressions from the resolutions adopted by several of the parishes of Jamaica, as forwarded by Lord Belmore to the home government, and printed in the parliamentary papers for 1832. Many more of the same kind might have been added.

Simultaneously with these meetings, the island was pervaded by a habit of free and passionate conversation among the colonists. Every one was talking of the proceedings of the British parliament; every one said that the king of England was going to give freedom to the slaves; and every one indulged himself in the unrestrained expression of his anger. The following samples of the manner in which the planters expressed themselves, sometimes to their slaves, and often in their hearing, deserve to be quoted. The master of one slave told him "that freedom was come from England, but that he would shoot every d—d black rascal before he should get it." Another heard his master say, "the king is going to give us free, but he hoped all his friends will be of his mind, and spill their blood first."

The reader has now before him the whole machinery by which the slave-population of Jamaica was thrown into a state of excitement in the autumn of 1831. They learned that the king was going to set them free, and that their masters were determined to prevent it. But they learned this *through their masters themselves*. The parish meetings were open; so much excitement being connected with them they awakened curiosity, and some slaves were, as any number might have been, present at them. Others heard the unguarded conversation which took place at their masters' table. Inquisitiveness being thus stimulated, the slaves sought after the newspapers, both colonial and English. The information thus acquired, although known in the first instance to a few individuals in the towns, was quickly communicated to the slaves on the plantations; and thus the entire slave-population of the island became penetrated in a few months with the irritating idea, that their masters resisted the benevolent intentions of the king. The planters may justly be said to have set their own estates on fire.

I find an early notice of the state of feeling I have described in a letter from Knibb to Mr. Dyer.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, July* 6, 1831.

"Such is the state of feeling here at present with respect to the extinction of slavery, that I should be almost afraid to go to any estate. I never knew anything like it, and in what it will end the Divine Being only knows. The slaves believe that they are soon to be free, and are anxiously waiting till King William sends them their free paper. Oppression and cruelty still go on. One of the inquirers here was this day threatened with flogging and imprisonment for not standing in the market all Lord's day, to sell her master's goods. I went to the Custos, and prevented it, telling him plainly that I would send word to the Colonial Office if the woman was punished. I should like your advice how to act. Numbers of our members are debarred the means of grace, by being obliged to buy and sell on the Lord's day for their owners. I have told them not to obey their owners in this respect, as it is contrary to the laws of God, and to those of the land. How would you act? Let me know. We really need instructions on these points, and on subjects connected with slavery; for, while you are exerting all your energies at home, ought we to sit all the day idle?"

The prevalent spirit manifested itself in the following instance, which occurred in the month of August.

Knibb employed as a servant a slave belonging to a Mr. John Vernon. Upon one occasion Mr. Vernon threatened to send him to the workhouse to be punished, for some cause not stated; whereupon Knibb wrote to him as follows:—

"SIR,—You need not have sent so impertinent a message that you would send George to the workhouse, as I have regularly paid the wages, and, on your sending in the bill, will do so for the past week. Hoping that the time will come when those who sprang from slaves will possess better feelings towards their fellows,

"I remain, yours obediently,

"W. KNIBB."

Somewhat stung, it may be supposed, by the last clause of this note, Mr. Vernon replied after the manner of the following extract: —

> "SIR,—Your impertinent and ungentlemanly letter, with base lies, I received, and am sorry that I was not at home to return an answer per your bearer, which would have been of more benefit to a Gosport journeyman baker * than the present one."

Not content with this retort, this volorous gentleman armed himself with a new cowskin, and placed himself in ambush opposite the chapel, having declared his intention of laying the cowskin upon Knibb "till he was soaked in blood." Informed of this by some of his friends, Knibb waited in his chapel for two hours; at which period, the lion not having thought fit to arise from his lair, he sent for Messrs. Murray and Box, methodist missionaries, and with them went to the court-house, to swear the peace against Mr. Vernon. The magistrates not choosing to think there was sufficient ground to bind this gentleman over to keep the peace, Mr. Vernon subsequently threatened a prosecution for perjury. The conclusion of this case I will give in Knibb's own words: —"The case to which I referred in my last I have dropped, simply because it referred to myself. I obtained legal advice that I was treated most unjustly, and I have reason to think that the magistrates would not serve me so a second time. The threat of a prosecution for perjury I silenced, by procuring three persons to swear to the same facts. They refused to administer the oaths!

---

* Knibb's current name of reproach.

I believe this was through fear. But enough of this. The circumstance has increased the attendance at chapel, and with such a result I am well pleased."

The system of extraordinary severity which the planters had adopted with their slaves gave rise to the following incident. Early in October several negroes came to Knibb as their minister, to ask him if what they heard was true, namely, "that free paper was come." When asked how they had heard such a thing, their answer was, "when busha and book-keeper flog us they say we are going to be free, and before it comes they will get it out of us." Knibb's reply was, "No, it is not true. Never let me hear anything of this again. When did busha tell you anything for your good? There is no free paper coming. Go home, and mind your master's work." At that time, however, he had no suspicion of a revolt, nor did those who thus spoke to him ever join in it.

As Christmas drew near, the irritating elements which the planters had diffused throughout the slave-population began to do their work. Under a full conviction that the king had made them free, it was suggested by a slave named Sam Sharp, that they should not work after Christmas without wages; and in order to engage many persons in concert for this purpose, meetings were held by him on a plantation called Retrieve, from about the middle of October. The plan was thus developed in detail at a meeting of drivers on different properties, held "two weeks before Christmas."

> "Some said, in answer to the question, What is to be done when we go to take order after Christmas? we will go and take it, and fire the whip, but none are to come out to work—this we will explain to the people. When all had done, Johnstone of Retrieve get up, and say, This will not do, for the women are chicken-

hearted; and if they see the driver in the field, some will get frightened, and go, and spoil all. I say, when the busha send for me I will give the order, but I will not go out. When busha hear this, and send for me, I will say, the people know well that they are free, and will not work any more without some satisfaction. Now by the time I say this, busha will be ordering his horse to go to the Bay, to say that we rebel. Then we won't let him go, but will take away his horse and his gun, and will say to him—Busha, we don't rebel, but we won't work without some satisfaction. We work long enough for nothing."

Such was Sam Sharp's plan, and nothing further seems to have been originally intended, or to have been concerted at any time. That some individuals entertained the further idea of setting fire to the properties and "fighting for freedom," must, I believe, be admitted, and by their acts the ultimate character of the outbreak was decided. The whole affair was concerted, as was natural, with studied secresy; but the aim of its promoters had in this respect very partial success. By the planters, through whatever means, everything was known, so that, on the breaking out of the insurrection, all was in readiness for action. From the missionaries, however, the plot had been effectually concealed; their mind being too well known to admit any hope of gaining their sanction for it, and they having in their employ no agents by whom the secret might have been discovered. On the night of the 27th of December the blaze of burning sugar-works told that the mischief was begun; and from that moment all was military massacre, and lawless revenge.

Among the missionaries who first suspected the issue of the excitement was Mr. Blyth, of the presbyterian church, and by him the idea was suggested to Knibb on the evening of the 26th of December. He immediately used such means as were in his power to prevent it, or, at all events, to withhold his own people from joining in it. I take the following account of his proceedings from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Dyer on the 14th of February, 1832, and entrusted for greater security to a gentleman going to America. It was posted in the United States. In this letter he says: —

"The first information I received of the intended revolt was on the 26th of December, when Mr. Blyth called upon me at Falmouth, and stated that the parish of St. James was in an awful state of excitement, and that he feared a rebellion among the slaves would be the result, unless we took the most prompt measures to undeceive the negroes, who had imbibed the notion that they were free. At his recommendation I sent Lewis Williams, a free worthy deacon of the church at Falmouth, to several of the estates where we had members, and Andrew Dixon, another of the deacons, to others, to assure the people that they were mistaken, and earnestly to entreat them from me to be obedient, and not to suffer themselves to be led away by wicked men. I then informed Mr. B. that I was about to start that day, with some of the brethren, to open the new chapel in Salter's Hill on the morrow, when I would not fail to make use of the painful information which he had communicated to me. On the evening of the 26th I started for Montego Bay, and early on the following morning rode to Salter's Hill, which is in the interior of the parish. I spent the whole of the time, with the exception of that part which was devoted to the public worship of God, in speaking to the people, assuring them that no free paper had arrived, begging them to go to their work on the morrow, and not to be led away into sin and violence. After brother Gardner had preached, I (as the elder missionary, and the one who knew most of the people,) went into the pulpit, and spoke nearly as follows—what my feelings were I never shall forget :—

"'My dear hearers, and especially those who attend regularly on the means of grace, and who belong, either as members or inquirers, to the church, pay great attention to what I have to say. It is now more than seven years since I left my native land to preach the gospel of Jesus Christ to you; and when I came, I made up my mind to live and die to promote your temporal and spiritual welfare. Till yesterday I had hoped that God had blessed my poor labours, and the labours of your dear minister, who loves you and prays for you, and who is now in England for his health. But I am pained—pained to the soul, at being told that many of you have agreed not to go to work any more for your owners; and I fear this is too true. I learn that some wicked persons have persuaded you that the king of England has made you free. Hear me! I love your souls, and I would not tell you a lie for the whole world; I assure you that it is false, false as hell can make it! I entreat you not to believe it, but to go to your work as formerly. If you have any love to Jesus Christ, to religion, to your ministers, or to those kind friends in England who have helped you to build this chapel, and who are sending a minister for you, do not be led away. God commands you to be obedient; if you do as he commands you, you may expect his blessing, but if you do not, he will not do you good.'*

"After much more earnest entreaty, both private and public, we left them with a promise that they would attend to our instructions; but I have since had too much reason to fear, that the idea of freedom had so intoxicated their minds as to nullify all I said. I rode back to the Bay in the afternoon, called upon brother Light in my way, and upon brother Murray; and when I arrived there, stated to them my hopes, my fears, and my exertions. They both thought me needlessly alarmed; but, long before midnight, the bright fires but too sadly confirmed my worst apprehensions."

Falmouth was at some distance from the principal seat of the insurrection; but the fearful work of desolation and slaughter going on so near them created, of course, extreme anxiety and alarm among the inhabitants. From the letter already quoted I extract the following account of the way in which the ensuing four days were spent by Knibb and his friends:—

---

* The force with which the conviction that freedom was come had taken hold of the slave-population, may be gathered from what Knibb afterwards learned of the reception of this address. The hearers generally were displeased with it. Some of them said that the white people had bribed him not to tell the truth. "Minister never said a word about freedom before; why does he come and talk to us about freedom now? The white people must have bribed him to it." The members of his own church, however, gave him credit; but one of them said to him at a later period, that "if minister had not been so urgent, he really should have believed, from the conversations of the planters and the slaves, that freedom was come."

"On Wednesday the 28th we returned to Falmouth, and found our friends in a state of great excitement. One of my members from Green Park estate, the leader, came down from his master's property with two rebellious slaves, whom he had found lurking there. He came to my house to ask me if he had done right. I said, 'Yes, William Henry, perfectly so: I am glad to hear of it. Go home, and tell the members on the property to defend it, even at the risk of life.' In the evening we all attended a special prayer-meeting at the Wesleyan chapel, to implore Almighty God to avert the threatening danger. Three presbyterian, three baptist, and one Wesleyan missionary, were present. It was a pleasing and, I trust, a profitable season. On Thursday evening we had a similar meeting at the Baptist chapel, at which God appeared present with us of a truth. Friday and Saturday were spent by me in conversing with every person I could meet with connected with my church, and in many instances I fully succeeded in my endeavours to undeceive those who appeared wavering. Much was I cheered by the observations of many of the slaves, who declared that they had no intention of doing what was wrong, and that they would defend their master's property to the last.

"On Lord's day morning we had a special prayer-meeting, at which large numbers of the country-slaves were present, and many sent to say that the reason they absented themselves was, that they wished to defend the estates from those who might come to burn them. I addressed them in much the same manner as I had done at Salter's Hill, reminded them of dear brother Mann, and exhorted them earnestly to cleave to the Lord, and to let their religion shine by their steady obedience. I spoke to the head people on several estates, and was pleased with the conduct they manifested. My leader on Oxford, and the one on Cambridge, had the whole charge of the estates committed to them, and they fulfilled the trust given them in a very praiseworthy manner. At present, not one estate where we have members connected with Falmouth has been burned. On some dissatisfaction has shown itself, but far different causes from religion have been the motive. On sabbath afternoon I was taken to the court-house, with my other missionary brethren, and after some time waiting in the guard-room, was released, and ordered to appear on the morrow. In the evening we had a very profitable prayer-meeting at my house, with the free members of the church."

The plot now thickened, and Knibb entered, in common with several of his brethren, upon a scene of unmerited outrage and suffering, having, happily, under the British government, few parallels. Although the principal facts have been long before the public, the personal narrative which I now present has never, I believe, appeared from the press. It is taken from the letter I have already quoted :—

"On Monday, the 2nd of January, after committing ourselves, our wives and little ones, to the divine protection, I went to the court-house, and was forced to enlist, or to be enrolled, in the 4th company as a private soldier, but was granted leave of absence until the following morning, on account of indisposition.

"Tuesday 3rd. Not knowing what might befall me this day, I took a solemn farewell of my dear wife and children, earnestly commending them to the care of that God who hath hitherto never failed to be our help. With a calm reliance upon my Heavenly Father, I went to perform my duties as a soldier, though rather anxious, from the conviction that my life would be attempted by the infuriated whites whenever I left the town. Soon, however, God released me from one trouble by permitting another to overtake me. While exhorting one of my deacons, Lewis Williams, to live near to God, I was arrested in the most brutal manner by a man named Paul Doeg. Commanding two black men to take me prisoner, he paraded before me in all the pomp of petty power, with a drawn sword, and had me conveyed to the guard-room. Soon afterwards I was removed to the barracks, where I found brethren Whitehorne and Abbott, who, like myself, were under arrest, none of us knowing why or wherefore. In about half an hour Captain Christie came, and informed us that Colonel Cadien had sent him to tell us that we were to be sent to head-quarters at Montego Bay, and that a conveyance would be ready in half an hour. I asked permission to see my wife and children, but was denied this pleasure. I then requested to write to them, but this small gratification was refused. Soon afterwards we were searched. When all was ready, we were paraded through the streets to the sea-side, guarded by four soldiers with a serjeant, and put into an open canoe. After a long and tedious voyage of seven hours, we were landed at Montego Bay about seven in the evening. The canoe being leaky, my feet were completely soaked; and this, as I had taken medicine, tended to increase the indisposition under which I was labouring. On landing we were marched to the court-house, then to head-quarters, Sir William Cotton's, back to the court-house, then up a steep hill to his honour the custos, then back to the court-house (which was made a barrack), where we were placed in the jury box, under a guard of four soldiers, militia-men. Every epithet of abuse that infuriated malice could invent was heaped upon me. The most horrid oaths that men or devils could conceive were poured upon us, with the most vulgar allusions that depraved nature could imagine. Twice was the bayonet pointed at my breast; and when I requested permission to lie down on the floor, being ill and fatigued, (having been harassed since the morning) I was damned and blasted, and told that if I moved I should be instantly shot.* Hell could scarcely be worse. Value your privileges, ye Britons, and feel and pray for those poor Christian slaves who are entirely under the control of such beings. No Algerine pirate, or savage Moor, would have treated me worse than I was treated by Englishmen. No fault had I committed; with none was I charged; but I was a missionary, and that was enough. I was calm and happy, and thankful that I felt a disposition to pray for my enemies, who were taunting me that I should be shot on the morrow,† and pleasing themselves with the sport. In the midst of this, and when all seemed against us, God raised us up a friend in Mr. Roby, who, after much trouble and fatigue, succeeded in delivering us from our foes, and provided us a bed at his own office. About twelve at night we had the pleasure of praying unmolested, of thanking God for his great kindness in not permitting us to be murdered, and of laying our weary limbs to rest. On Wednesday morning the same kind friend procured our liberation on bail, J. Manderson, Esq., member of Assembly, standing bail for me. Our good wives had arrived by land, and again we joined in grateful thanksgivings to that God who was better to us than all our fears. The same day I was attacked with fever, brought on by exposure, wet feet, and anxiety. God mercifully restored me, and enabled me to cast my cares upon him."

---

* "I stumbled on a bed in the court-house, in approaching the jury-box, where they said we were to sleep: the sentry lifted up his gun with the bayonet on, and told me, if I did not get up that moment, he would stab me.

"When I arrived in the jury-box, I asked permission very civilly to lie down on the boards, and said I was tired; and he said, 'You damned villain, if you stir one inch, or speak one word, I will stab you to the heart. You are to be shot at ten o'clock in the morning, and I am very glad of it.'" *Parliamentary Evidence.*

† So strong was the expectation that this would be the result, that some of the planters, without waiting for the actual perpetration of the tragedy, and perhaps with a view of still further irritating the slave-population, went on several estates the next morning, and pretended to read from a paper an account of its having taken place. As further, and perhaps better evidence of the strength of this expectation, and as doing honour to the writers of it, I may insert the following note sent down to Falmouth by an express on the morning of the 4th of January. Of the gentlemen by whom it is signed,

Knibb, with his fellow sufferers for the name of Jesus, worthy of like honourable mention with himself, was now a prisoner on the general charge, embodied, however, in no form more distinct than current rumour, of having aided the insurrection. Officially, no charge whatever was communicated to him, or preferred against him. Strenuous efforts were made, however, to get up a charge. Within a few hours after he had been removed from Falmouth, his house was searched by Mr. Dyer, a magistrate and editor, of whom we shall hear more hereafter, and papers of every kind were taken possession of. Great pains were taken also to procure witnesses against him from among the slaves; but every effort failed.

two were ministers of the Scotch church, and the third, Mr. Barrett, proprietor of Cinnamon Hill and Retreat Estates.

"*Falmouth, 4th January*, 1832.

"Dear Sir,—It was only when we returned from Cinnamon Hill last night that we heard of your accusation and arrest. We deeply sympathize with you and your brethren in your present trouble. We have heard this morning of apprehensions being entertained for your safety, and use the utmost haste to assure you that we are convinced you have not been, either intentionally or directly, guilty of creating the present insurrection. We are prepared to return to Montego Bay and witness to this effect, and, as far as our knowledge goes, to your peaceable character as a Christian and a minister.

"We are, dear Sir,
"With most sincere feeling for your affliction,
"H. M. Waddell,
S. M. Barrett,
George Blyth.

"To the Rev. William Knibb,
Montego Bay."

Three weeks thus passed away, the work of military murder going on the while, when, in evident despair of the success of any judicial process, an attempt was made to induce him to retire from the island. He narrates it in the following terms: —

"On Sunday the 22nd of January, our indefatigable friend, Mr. Roby, called upon us, and after apologizing for intruding on that day, informed us that he had just had an interview with Mr. Custos Barrett respecting us, who informed him that there was nothing against Mr. Burchell* in his papers, but that there was a letter written by Mr. Knibb to Mr. B., while in England, clearly stating his views of slavery, and that it was his opinion that persons holding such sentiments could not be permitted to remain in a slave colony. He added, 'that if we could leave the colony, he would try and guarantee a passport from the governor.' Mr. Roby stated that he had asked the custos whether he wished him to communicate this intelligence to us. His answer was, 'O yes; by all means, I wish it.' Mr. Roby further said, 'I tell it in the presence of your wives, that they may be frightened, and use their influence to induce you to leave.' He (Mr. R.) hoped that we should, as it would be safer for us, and, in his opinion, (he being a high churchman) better for the colony. We told him that we could not think of doing so; that we were innocent, calumniated, and persecuted men; that all we needed to vindicate our character and our proceedings was a fair and impartial hearing, and that our going away now would be attributed to guilty fear, which we did not feel. He replied, 'No; state to the governor your innocence, your readiness to undergo the strictest investigation, and show at the present period your willingness to submit to the highest authority in the land, even though that opinion may be contrary to your own.' We replied that we were the agents of a society who supported us; that we were accountable to them; and that we could not leave our posts of duty, while there was any possibility of remaining. Mr. Roby told the substance of this to Mr. Barrett, and added, 'They will not leave; they appear to be determined to be martyrs, I think, in the cause of discord.'"

---

* Mr. Burchell had been arrested on board the ship Garland Grove, in the bay.

Disappointed in their hope of intimidating the missionaries, as well as baffled in their attempts to proceed against them by law, the desperate leaders in this fearful tragedy resolved on proceeding to measures of violence. Already had several of the baptist chapels been destroyed, and on the 8th of February similar vengeance was wreaked on the chapel at Montego Bay. The white mob who effected this work of demolition afterwards thirsted for blood.

"About four o'clock in the afternoon," says Knibb, "a kind friend informed us that the rioters were on their way to the house where we resided, armed with bludgeons, and resolved to murder us, and to demolish any house where we might be harboured. We knew not what to do, when another friend came and urged our immediate flight to Mr. Manderson's, who kindly offered us, our wives, and our little ones, an asylum, adding, 'I will defend them to the last drop of my blood.'* The mob, hearing that we had fled, returned to their houses. This afforded us time to deliberate what was to be done. Our friend Mr. Roby went into the harbour, and made inquiry if any of the merchant captains would receive us; but all were afraid. He then went to the captain of his majesty's ship, North Star, who promised us a refuge for the night. Having informed us of the result of his exertions, he with another gentleman escorted † us, (Mrs. Abbott and Mrs. Whitehorne, Mrs. Knibb, and the little ones, remained at Mr. Manderson's,) and in the king's boat, through mercy, we arrived safely on board. While here I was strongly advised by the officials to escape for my life, for that, if I returned on shore, I should be murdered. Of course, this I could not think of doing. I was *innocent*, my Heavenly Father knew it; I was also under bail, and I would rather have died than disgrace the cause of Jesus.

"On Thursday my brethren left the North Star, but I was advised to remain another day, as prejudice was very hot against me. On the following day, Friday the 10th of February, my indefatigable friend Mr. R. came for me. I visited dear Burchell on board the Garland Grove, heard the pleasing news that he was no longer a prisoner, and reached my home, wife, child, and brethren in safety. There I learnt with pleasure that my brethren Whitehorne and Abbott had been released; but I was still detained on bail."

---

* "He said 'They shall kill me first. Mr. Knibb, do not be alarmed.'"—*Parliamentary Evidence.*

† "They put their pistols in their pockets, and guarded us on board."—*Ibid.*

The narrative has now conducted us to the date of a letter written by Knibb to his mother. He had already communicated intelligence for her through Mr. Gotch, of Kettering; but this letter was direct, and it contains so interesting a development of his feelings that I shall give it without abridgment. It is affecting to add that the parent to whom it was addressed was already beyond the reach of the anxieties it was intended to allay. Mrs. Knibb, sen. died in the latter end of January, a period at which information of the insurrection could not have arrived in England.

TO HIS MOTHER.

"*Montego Bay, February* 10, 1832.

"Whether this will be the last letter you will receive from your son, is known only to that kind and indulgent God who has hitherto preserved my unworthy life. To give you a detailed statement of the scenes through which I have lately passed, is impossible; my soul hath them still in remembrance, and is humbled within me. What is before me I cannot tell, but all is known to that God whose I am, and whom I serve. O for grace and faith to trust in him! Through the medium of Mr. Gotch you will, I expect, have heard that I was taken a prisoner on the charge of being concerned in the rebellion that has broken out among the slaves. Although I have been five weeks in this state, or rather on bail, I do not know yet what the specific charges are. I know that I am innocent; but such is the awful state of feeling here, that my only hope of escape is in Him who turneth the hearts of men as the rivers of water are turned. Should I escape, I shall return to England, as I am not safe from assassination in this part of the world. Our chapels at this place, at Falmouth, Rio Bueno, and I doubt not at other places, are levelled with the ground. Two days ago I escaped for my life, and took refuge on board one of his majesty's ships in the harbour. I have this morning returned, being bound not to leave this place. Does my mother ask me, Do you repent becoming a missionary? My answer is, NO. Gladly would I spend the few remaining days of my pilgrimage in this land, were it the will of God. That I should not be tried, and found guilty, appears at present to be impossible. May the Lord in his great mercy direct me, and enable me to act as in his sight!

"My dear Mary is divinely supported under this deep trial, and has been of much comfort to me. May the Lord in his tender mercy prepare her for every future afflictive dispensation! The two children, William and Catherine, I have not seen for five weeks—I believe they are well; may the Lord protect and preserve them. Little Ann is with us, in ill health. I have been informed this morning, that the mob have destroyed, or intend to destroy, my books and furniture. I shall feel the loss of the books much, as I have striven hard for seven years to obtain them, and intended them as a legacy to my children: however, may God grant a sanctified use, and all will be well. The kindness of my thrice dear people at Falmouth makes my heart overflow with gratitude to God: my heart is with them, but I fear that I shall never preach to them again. Of the charge brought against me I am perfectly innocent. O, this does support me. My Heavenly Father knows it, and however it may issue on earth, I hope to be acquitted when I, and those who are thirsting for my blood, stand at the tribunal of God. Commending you to God, and to the word of his grace, with earnest desires that his glory may be extended to earth's remotest bounds,

"I remain, my dear mother,
"Your affectionate son,
"WILLIAM KNIBB."

I now resume the narrative contained in the letter from which I have so largely quoted: —

"On Saturday, the 11th of February, I looked back on all the goodness and mercy which the Lord God had caused to pass before me. This day seven years ago I landed on this island, and do I repent coming? No! With eternity and a jail in prospect, I do not. I mourn over my sins, I long to be more active in the service of God, and earnestly do I pray that I may come forth from the furnace of affliction purified as gold seven times tried. Held a prayer-meeting in the afternoon, secretly, for fear of our enemies, to pray that God would protect dear brother Burchell, who is fetched as a prisoner on shore. Heard the painful news that both he and dear Gardner are committed to jail; may God support them. O that his glory may be promoted by us all!

"12*th*, *Sabbath.* It is now six weeks since I have been permitted to preach the gospel. Often do I think of my dear people in Falmouth, their kindness overwhelms me. The chapel is rased to the ground, and they are scattered as sheep without a shepherd. O that I may not forget their wants by dwelling too much on my own sorrows!

"*Tuesday*, 14*th*. Mrs. K. went to Falmouth, to look after the furniture saved from the infuriated whites by our female friends, and to collect evidence: the Lord in his mercy protect her! In the evening heard that I was released from my bail, having been a prisoner seven weeks, and not any charge brought against me. Heard that they were trying to find one; may the Lord disappoint them, if it be his will.

"Copy of my discharge, after seven weeks' and one day's detention.

"'*Montego Bay*, *February* 14, 1832.

"'Having examined the evidence of Samuel Stennett, Adam, and Paris against —— Knibb, baptist missionary, and finding nothing therein to support a criminal prosecution, I declare the said —— Knibb discharged, with his sureties, from their recognizances.

"'RICHARD BARRETT, *Custos.*'"

"'(Copy) W. K.'"

Having been released from custody at Montego Bay on the 14th of February, on the 15th he went to Falmouth. Here he found the feeling of the white inhabitants extremely virulent. As a consequence of it his landlord requested him not to return to his house, on the ground that he dared not rent it to him; and he accordingly accepted entertainment at the house of Elizabeth Dunn, one of the members of his church, and a free person of colour. His furniture had been saved from destruction only by the promptitude of his friends in removing it. His chapel had been destroyed on the sixth and seventh of the month, after having been used during the insurrection as barracks for the St. Ann's regiment of militia; he could not, consequently, attempt the resumption of religious services. He could not, indeed, without hazard, quit the house. Two gentlemen informed him that a party had assembled for the purpose of murdering him, and cautioned him especially against going out in the evening. They warned him also of an intention to attack the house, for the purpose of tarring and feathering him, an operation in which one of them stated he had himself been requested to assist. The latter scheme was actually attempted. Having written, in anticipation of it, to Mr. Miller, the major-general of militia, and received a promise of protection, he retired to rest, a few friends within the house remaining on the watch. About ten or eleven o'clock a number of persons, amounting to about fifty, more or less completely disguised in women's apparel, approached the house, hallooing, hooting, and throwing stones. His friends opened the window, and Knibb, being awake, said, "Who is there?" The only answer to this inquiry was a volley of stones, some of which entered the apartment. His friends said, "What are we to do if they come? If we cry *murder* we are afraid nobody will come." He said, "Cry *fire!*" They rejoined, "Where are we to say it is?" He replied, "Tell them it is in hell, for those who tar and feather parsons." On the cry of *fire* this respectable and valorous company ran away. This process was repeated three successive nights; till at length the fears of his kind hostess were so highly excited that she begged him to quit the house, which he accordingly did, placing himself between two women, and making his escape under cover of the night as he best could.

As he had been released from his bail on a document which officially states that the evidence on which he had been arrested would not sustain a criminal prosecution, it might have been supposed that he would have suffered no further judicial molestation. The planters, however, could not suffer their intended victim so easily to escape. They thought it probable that a Cornwall jury might arrive at a different decision from the custos of St. James's. At all events, it was politic not to throw away a chance. Accordingly, when, on the 12th of March, the Cornwall assizes were opened at Montego Bay, the attorney-general announced his intention of sending up indictments against Messrs. Gardner and Knibb, for inciting the slaves to rebellion. Without having had the slightest previous intimation, Knibb heard of this as he was walking about the streets; and, upon hearing of it, he went down immediately, and surrendered himself for trial. Obtaining bail for £1000, he was not sent to prison. Far from being troubled, he was in truth rejoiced at this occurrence, since it afforded him the opportunity he had all along desired of publicly proving his innocence. Having but a week for the collection of evidence, (for the trial was fixed for the 19th,) he applied himself to it, under the direction of a legal adviser, with great assiduity and success, so that, on the day appointed, he had no less than three hundred witnesses in attendance on his behalf. The trial of Mr. Gardner actually came on on the 23rd, but the case got up against him altogether broke down. Warned by this issue, the attorney-general at once abandoned the charge against Knibb, by entering a *nolle prosequi*. This was greatly to Knibb's disappointment. It was, however, equivalent to a verdict of acquittal. It must be stated, nevertheless, that Knibb owed his triumph in no degree to the justice of a Jamaica jury, for the grand jury had returned *a true bill.* The manner in which they arrived at this conclusion is too characteristic not to be related.

In support of the indictment against Knibb only four witnesses were examined by the grand jury, all of these being slaves (slave evidence not being legally admissible), and all of them from one estate. Two of these witnesses, Venture and Paris, refused in any way to criminate him; upon which one of the grand jury accused them of having been sworn by Knibb not to speak the truth, they being baptist-members, and for proof of this assertion he "felt their heads," to ascertain the absence of that lock of hair which was alleged to be cut out whenever the oath of secresy had been taken. No discovery being thus made, and they still refusing to say anything against Knibb, they were kicked out of the jury room, and called "d—d baptist liars."

Between the finding of the bill and the day of trial, Knibb met with one of these two slaves in the gaol. The slave asked to speak with him; and Knibb replied, that, having heard he was a witness against him, he could not and would not speak to him. After the trial had been abandoned, both Venture and Paris spoke to him, declaring their wish to assure him that they had not said a word against him.

To aggravate his troubles at this period, a letter came to hand from Fen Court, conceived and written, of course, in utter ignorance of his calamitous situation, pressing on his consideration the pecuniary difficulties of the society, and suggesting the propriety of his being supported by his flock. Nothing could be more *mal-à-propos* than the arrival of this letter. He found time, however, to write an answer, from which, as it exhibits another feature of his very trying position, I extract the following passage:

TO MR. DYER.

"I was looking forward with pleasure to the time when I could relieve the Parent Society, but this awful visitation of Providence has for the present destroyed all our prospects. The report being current that I was to be shot, my creditors became clamorous, and I was obliged to do the best my distracted state of mind would allow. I have sold what little things I could, to support myself and family, but I assure you that I have not anything to buy the necessaries of life. £84 I had in Stewart Town, and the £100 I had in Rio Bueno, are gone in the destruction of the chapels, and my furniture is so injured in hiding it from the rabble, that it will not fetch much. One of Mr. Cantlow's horses has been ruined, and I have given it away, as I had not money to support it. His other horse and mine are stolen. Every one thinks here that they may abuse missionaries and their property as much as they please. If I can sell my chaise it will pay every debt I now owe; but I must look to you for bread to eat. I deeply feel for your difficulties; I mourn that I cannot relieve them. Had I any money, it should be devoted to the cause which is now suffering, but which will eventually triumph."

Unrelenting as the hostility was with which Knibb was pursued by the planters, the manner in which they applied to him when he could subserve their purposes, affords conclusive evidence that in their hearts they sincerely respected him. In the interval between the finding of the bill by the grand jury and his trial—at the moment, therefore, when he stood under the gravest criminal charge, and was about to be tried for his life—he was applied to by the highest authorities, to aid them in discovering the plan and ramifications of the revolt. The Hon. William Miller, custos of Trelawney, and major-general of militia, with whom he had previously a personal acquaintance through having preached on one of his properties, sent for him, and stated that he had been requested by his excellency the governor to use his efforts to find out the cause of the rebellion; that he was perfectly satisfied of his (Mr. Knibb's) innocence; that he had conferred with the chief justice, as well as one of the magistrates on the bench, and that they agreed they could not do better than ask him to assist them. Knibb's reply was, "I shall be very willing to do anything that will benefit the island." In compliance with this request he had interviews with seven or eight of the persons then under confinement, and supposed to have been principally concerned. In a memorandum written at the time he gives the following account of an interview with Colonel Gardner and Captain Dove, on the very day before his expected trial: —

> "On Thursday the 22nd of March, at the request of the Hon. W. Miller, sanctioned by the Hon. W. Tuckett, chief justice, I had an interview of several hours with these individuals, two of the rebels in the late rebellion. Mr. Miller stated to me that his object was to find out the cause of the rebellion, and its plan of operations; and he stated in my presence to the prisoners, that, if they would make a full confession of all they knew about it, he would interest himself to obtain a pardon from the governor for them. The Rev. Mr. Mackentyre was with me. After telling them how much I was astonished at their conduct, they being members of a baptist church, I urged it on them to tell me the whole truth, since without this they could not obtain the divine forgiveness. I then engaged in prayer with them."

The confession which he obtained from these men, bears all the marks of sincerity and frankness: the promise held out to them, however, was not fulfilled. Both of them were subsequently executed.

After the proceedings at law were abandoned, the malignant spirit of the white population continued to threaten his life. Mr. Miller and Dr. Gordon sent for him, and said, "Mr. Knibb, it is our decided opinion that your life is not safe. We would do anything to protect you, but we cannot protect you." In two days, therefore, under their urgent advice, he left that part of the island.

During this extraordinary period, which may not inaptly be called the reign of terror in Jamaica, it was of course impossible for the slaves on the various estates who were members of Knibb's congregation, to give any direct proofs of their sympathy with him. A cruel experiment made upon their feelings, however, with a view either to malignant gratification on the one hand, or mischievous excitement on the other—charity allows no third supposition—gave occasion to a manifestation of regard at once tender and subdued. The reader will recollect the period at which it was rumoured that Knibb was to be shot the next morning. On that morning it was read, as from a paper, to the slaves on several estates, that the execution had taken place. The whole effect of this announcement was to induce them to send down to Falmouth to know if it was true. For themselves "they did not believe it; they did not think God would permit it to be true." When his return to Falmouth was reported, messengers came from thirty estates to ascertain the fact.

It is not because at this period there is any question of his innocence, but to place on record a gratification which was afforded to him in his deepest sorrows, and to do honour to the gentleman who courageously rendered it to him, that I insert the following letter addressed to Knibb while under arrest by S. M. Barrett, Esq., a large landed proprietor, and brother to E. Barrett, Esq., proprietor of Oxford and Cambridge estates.

"*Cornwall, St. James's, February* 23, 1832.

"DEAR SIR,—I avail myself of the return of your messenger to Montego Bay, to express to you the sincere pleasure I feel in hearing of your release from the restraint which had been imposed upon you and your brethren. I can assure you that I never did from the beginning, nor do I at this time, attribute to yourself, or to Mr. Burchell, any blame as directly producing or promoting the late melancholy disturbances. Having this feeling, I deeply regret that the feelings of the country should so strongly mark out yourself, and the other baptist missionaries, as objects of persecution. My opinion, an opinion resulting from my own frequent and confidential intercourse, not only with my own negroes, but with the negroes of various other states, is, that religion had nothing to do with the late disturbances, but, on the contrary, its absence was a chief cause of them. No people could have conducted themselves better than all the negroes upon Cambridge and Oxford estates, and in like manner the people upon Retreat Pen. Even at the period when the prejudice ran strongest against you, and when it was scarcely politic for a negro to say anything in your favour, upon every occasion when I have inquired of the members of your congregation, upon any of my properties, whether you had ever taught them to expect freedom, the answers have invariably been such as to convince me the charges against you were ill-founded. In the absence of all proof to criminate any one in particular, or any class of persons, professional or otherwise, I would not uncharitably suspect any one, or venture to assign any cause for so great an evil as it has pleased Providence to afflict us with. I should have deeply deplored, for the sake of religion, had any of its ministers so far perverted the truth of the gospel as to induce the shedding of blood. I do therefore most sincerely rejoice that you stand exonerated of all guilt, as connected with the late disturbances, so far as any proof has as yet been adduced.

"I remain, dear Sir,
"Your obedient servant,
"(Signed) "S. M. BARRETT.

"*The Rev. W. Knibb.*"

Knibb was of course very anxious as to the part which the members of the church at Falmouth might have taken in the revolt. His carefulness on this point, and the very satisfactory result of his inquiries, appear in the following extract of a letter to Mr. Tinson:—

"You will have seen in the papers a list of the persons sentenced at Falmouth, amounting in the whole to sixty-two. I have carefully examined this list by my church-book, and find that only three of the number were members of the church. I cannot tell how many were inquirers, but I do not think there were many. Neither of these three were sentenced to death or banishment. Thus out of 980 *members*, as far as I can learn, only three have been found in any degree guilty; while on many estates, my people have defended their master's property, night and day, and on one they have taken up the rebels who came to burn it. As to the dying confessions said to be made by those who were shot, I know not one of the persons; and I do firmly believe that they never were in the chapel. The following is an extract from a letter Mrs. Knibb received from Mrs. Waddell, last week. 'I am happy to say that some of your people in this quarter have adorned the gospel by their becoming conduct, particularly ——. Mr. Cron says they have saved Carlton, and completely exonerated Mr. Knibb from ever having said anything to excite the rebellion.' Mr. Cron is the attorney. We have twenty-six members on the estate, and a number of inquirers. I have members on eighty-four different properties, not one of which has been burnt.

"It is not true that none but baptists are engaged in it; both Moravians and Wesleyans are implicated. The majority, especially of the leaders, are negroes attached to no religious society. Nor is it true that the presbyterians are free: some of their members have been hung, and their vaunting is false and foolish."

Knibb had the satisfaction of seeing the noble conduct of some of his members gratefully acknowledged by the highest authorities in the island. One of them had the inestimable boon of freedom conferred upon him by the House of Assembly as a reward.

The insurrectionary fires of Jamaica were soon quenched in blood, and the island was reduced to a state of tranquillity. But the planters were not satisfied with the result of their prowess. They were not only fearful of its recoil, but disappointed in its immediate effects. Without saying that they got up the revolt in order to obtain a pretext and a means of expelling the sectarians from the island, it may safely be affirmed that they strove to turn it to this account, and that for this purpose they aggravated its horrors. Their want of success disappointed and galled them. No missionary had been either hanged or shot; and with respect to the baptist missionaries, with the single exception of Mr. Burchell, not one of them had been driven from the island. With their chapels in ruins, their flocks dispersed, their habitations plundered, they yet stayed, determined, it would seem, to partake and to cheer the afflictions of those they loved. The planters felt that this would never do. In this event much blood and treasure would have been spent in vain. They resorted, therefore, to another method, to which they hoped the spirit of the time would give sanction and efficacy. They formed a society which they called the Colonial Church Union, with the twofold object of defending the guilty parties from such measures as might be directed against them by the home government, and of effecting the final expulsion of the sectarians from the island. Public meetings were again held, and speeches made, and resolutions adopted, as vehement in their way as those of 1831.

From the sentiments expressed by the promoters of the Colonial Church Union, it became manifest that the opposition of the colonists was directed, not against dissenters merely, but against the effective instruction of the slaves in any form. The devoted and useful part of the episcopal clergy came under the same ban as the dissenters. "Let us petition the Assembly," says the *Jamaica Courant* of March 3, "to place our own clergy under our own control, and that of our representatives in vestry, even to the expulsion of those missionaries and curates who are still here, paid by, and under the influence of, our enemies, and who have already been detected in their vile vocation. The old church government and discipline was better than the present—*let then the old laws revive.* The episcopal government has here been an experiment, which has failed; for under it sectarianism has increased tenfold, and flourished even among the ministers of our own church. In fact, sectarianism came in with that system; *let them expire together.* We have lately seen the danger of trusting our people to the instruction of those who are not under our own control; let us, therefore, henceforward, hold the purse and power in our own hands."

I have inserted this extract to show that the ground taken by the planters was substantially this, that the religious instruction of the slaves was inconsistent with the maintenance of slavery. The recoil of such a sentiment was both natural and just—then it is necessary that slavery should be put down. Such, in fact, was its recoil in the mind of Knibb and some of his fellow labourers in the island, and it wrought an entire change in their plan of operation. Hitherto they had gone, as their instructions from home prescribed, on the principle of saying nothing about slavery, and of doing all they could consistently do to conciliate the planters; but when they found that the planters could not be reconciled at all to the efficient religious instruction of the slaves, but that, for the sake of maintaining the system of slavery intact, they would violently expel Christianity, they declared hostility against slavery itself, and resolved to identify themselves with those who had long been seeking its abolition. Knibb's resolution was then taken, never to rest till he saw this object achieved.

In the early part of March the missionaries were in deliberation on the propriety and necessity of sending one or two of their number to England, to plead their cause with the British public, and to procure redress, as far as redress could be procured, for their wrongs. Their eyes were directed to Knibb, who wrote to Mr. Dyer on the 5th of that month in the following terms:—

TO MR. DYER.

"I hope I shall not have to leave the island; I feel as if it were impossible to quit the people. Do pray for us. Do entreat the British Christians for us. Many have bound themselves by an oath to murder us. Shall we look and cry to Britain in vain? I know we shall not to God. O remember our poor slave members! Their sufferings now would make a heart of stone weep. If something is not done speedily for them, many of them will be martyrs. That God in his infinite mercy may guide, bless, keep, and preserve you, and give you and the committee all the wisdom you so much need in this deeply bitter trial, is my earnest prayer."

The destiny which he deprecated, however, awaited him. He was finally commissioned by his brethren to visit England on their behalf, and to co-operate to this end with Mr. Burchell, who was making his way thither *viâ* America. The resolution that was passed was in the following terms:—

"Considering the present distressed state of our mission, the impossibility of occupying several of our stations, the consequent redundancy of missionaries, and the manifest improbability of obtaining redress here, we deem it expedient, for the just representation of our wrongs, and the advancement of the society's funds, that one of our brethren be appointed as a deputation to proceed forthwith to England, to act under the direction of the committee; and that brother Knibb, on account of his intimate acquaintance with the mission in the disturbed part of the island, and his knowledge of circumstances immediately connected with the rebellion, be appointed for that purpose."

In consequence of this request, Knibb and his family sailed from Kingston on the 26th of April. Malice, however, pursued him to the last. In his evidence before parliament he states both his belief that the planters would have murdered him, if they could have caught him, and the fact that he was two or three times obliged to run for his life. Just as he was about to leave the island he received credible information that twenty persons had sworn to put him to death. Little did they know how pregnant and how precious was the life thus providentially rescued from their hands.

CHAPTER X.

FROM HIS ARRIVAL IN ENGLAND, IN JUNE, 1832, TO HIS RETURN TO JAMAICA, IN AUGUST, 1834.

Knibb was accompanied to England by his wife and family; a circumstance to which it is probably owing that there are no written details of his voyage. None, at least, have reached me.

The single incident I can record is, however, a characteristic one. On the pilot's coming on board in the English channel, his first question was, "Well, pilot, what news?" "The reform bill has passed." "Thank God," he rejoined. "Now I'll have slavery down. I will never rest, day or night, till I see it destroyed, root and branch."

He landed at Liverpool early in June, and, leaving his family there, hastened to Kettering. From thence he wrote to Mrs. Knibb a letter which, although it contains very little matter of fact, is nevertheless to me peculiarly interesting. Its charm for me is its playfulness. Let the reader think of him, either as recently escaped from the den of oppression and the hands of murderers, or as on the eve of the most strenuous conflict ever waged by a single man with a great and influential party, and then let him peruse this letter, without surprise, if he can, at the wonderful elasticity of the mind which could so perfectly have recovered itself from the influences of the past, and hold itself so cheerful amidst those of the future. The letter, almost unabridged, is as follows:—

TO HIS WIFE.

"*Kettering, Saturday morning.*

"MY DEAR MARY,—I may as well confess my sins, and not take greater credit to myself for writing thus early than I deserve. The truth is, I have forgotten the parcel committed to my trust by the gentleman at whose house we supped, and I wish you immediately to forward it, accompanied by any article I may have left, directed to Fen Court. Having begun, I may as well go on, and tell you something of my journey. Well, to begin at the beginning. After I was fairly seated in the vehicle, I found myself encompassed by a few beings of the same species, of different sizes, habits, and tastes. One was a pettifogging merchant, who sat with his hands in his pockets, like a Dutchman, and said nothing; but by the twitchings of his fingers in the pockets of his garments that covered the lower part of his humanity, I gathered that he was counting his gains and losses. Opposite was a real John Bull lady, come out to see the world. She travelled, she said, to see the fine places, and had spent a day in Liverpool for that purpose. She always bought a guide at every town, that she might know what she was looking at. I think she had been a publican's better half. She talked of reform, the pier-head at Ramsgate, her fear of water ever since she saw a young man drowned, railroads, and King William. How I envied her!

She enjoyed everything, and appeared highly satisfied with herself. She had a companion in travel, rather older, who testified her approbation of passing events by a significant nod. I think she was yet a spinster, and appeared to travel to see, ere she put off this mortal coil, what the world was about. One was afraid that the new London bridge would fall, and another thought it strong enough. I sat and said nothing, musing on the different motives for being shut up in a coach, and trundled so fast as not to see any scenery to advantage. But I am now at Manchester, where I procured a place in the coach with some difficulty, it being full. I could not con the passengers nor the prospects, except one Londoner, who asked me if it did not sometimes rain very hard in Jamaica, and whether the negroes had waterproof clothes to wear when such heavy showers descended. He thought that it was hot there, that the cholera was a painful disease, and asked me what size horses and cows were in Jamaica.

"The road is delightfully enchanting. The country ?—why it is England. The buoyant joy of the little, dirty, rosy-pated urchins enchanted me. I thought of the African, the little naked negro in his tray, crammed, like a turkey, by the old woman, while his fond mother was toiling under a vertical sun, and not permitted a mother's richest blessing, to lull to rest, upon her bosom, every infantine grief in sleep. O yes—

My heart is in Jamaica, my heart it is not here,
When I think of their sufferings it soon arrives there,
And my prayers shall be for her, that she may be free,
Unfettered, unbound, as the waves of the sea.

Thus you see, this is an impromptu to fill up the sheet. Now I am at Derby, when, what do you think ? it was fair-day ! Yes, nothing less than a real, substantial, English fair-day. Squeaking of trumpets, stuffing of urchins with all the artillery of a confectioner's shop, farmers in high debate, jogging on their plough horses as if they were pounding coffee on the saddles. All was joy. Ever and anon passed a young substantial-built Englishman, with his coy lass. The little basket, or the protruding pockets, put me in mind of Fanny's fairings. Some of them were truly pretty—I thought of days gone by. Who comes here ? A modest looking woman neatly dressed, dragging on the arm of a stupid drunken husband (what a prostitution of the word !) as he rolls from side to side. I could not join in the laugh of the passengers; I thought of the

> affection a woman must feel for a man, before she could be seen as his wife when he had sunk so far below the brute."

He came to London burdened with many anxieties. Whether the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society would approve his return; whether they would sustain their missionaries; and whether they would co-operate with him for the overthrow of slavery, were all of them, but especially the last, questions that deeply stirred him.

What was then known as the open meeting of the committee, was to be held on the 19th, and at that meeting his first interview with his brethren generally would take place. The few days which intervened were occupied by private intercourse with the principal supporters of the mission, who, with one voice, strove to dissuade him from the course he proposed. Having imbibed a maxim then very prevalent, and, certainly, for slaveholders very convenient, that slavery was a political subject, they still wished, notwithstanding all their agents had suffered, to maintain silence on it, lest a political character should be given to the mission. They were even, in some degree, inclined to record their disapprobation of the extent to which the missionaries in Jamaica had already departed from their instructions in this matter. That the conversations thus held must have been severely trying to the mind of Knibb, there can be no doubt; but they did not shake his purpose. He met with individuals who spoke to him in a different tone; and in the language of one of these, Dr. Thomas Price, then pastor of the church at Devonshire Square, London, and a member of the committee, I lay before the reader the actual result.

> "I was at that time," says Dr. Price, in a letter to me, "actively engaged as an anti-slavery lecturer, and Knibb and myself had

much intercourse on the subject. I exhorted him to be decided, and, if necessary, to break with the committee rather than be gagged. I believe he slept at my house the night preceding the meeting of the committee. He was calm, but most determined; and his decision was in the highest degree honourable to his integrity, as there was then no certainty of his being sustained by the feeling out of doors, against any adverse decision of the committee.

"However we went. Knibb gave a detailed account of his sufferings, and those of his brethren, which was received of course, with the deepest interest. Mr. Dyer exhorted to prudence, and a temperate policy. At length Knibb stood up, and his words as near as I can recollect, certainly in substance, were, 'Myself, my wife, and my children, are entirely dependent on the baptist mission; we have landed without a shilling, and may at once be reduced to penury. But, if it be necessary, I will take them by the hand, and walk bare-foot through the kingdom, but what I will make known to the Christians of England what their brethren in Jamaica are suffering.' I believe I was the first to speak after this declaration; and I need not say, I exhorted him to stand by his avowal, and assured him of the sympathy and co-operation of many."

This unequivocal declaration before the committee produced a great effect. It quelled all active opposition, of which, I believe, nothing more was ever heard, and it won for him some decided friends. Everything depended now on the manner of his reception by the public.

I am not yet, however, going to introduce the reader to the public meeting. I am able to present to him a glimpse of Knibb as he was in privacy on the day which intervened between it and the open committee-meeting, from the pen of his cousin, Mr. Benjamin Dexter, then a student at Stepney college, and now a missionary in Jamaica. I give from his letter to me the following extract: —

"On the Wednesday evening, after hearing the sermon for the mission at Surrey chapel, he invited me to spend the night with him at his lodgings. Here we met brethren Phillippo and Cantlow, with several other gentlemen, some of whom argued the impolicy of abolition, and declared their belief that the negro, if free, would starve, rather than work for his subsistence. Never shall I forget the characteristic ardour with which our brother met this and other objections. 'The negro starve! sir,' said he, 'the negro starve! What, when he can go to a plantain-sucker, and with one blow of his cutlass procure as much food as will serve him for a week? *Starve*, sir! What, when he can by one day's labour in his provision-ground obtain food sufficient to keep him and his family for a fortnight? Starve *when he is free*, sir! How is it then that he has not starved ere this, while he has but twenty-six days in the year to provide for himself? The conversation having been kept up with great interest to a late hour, we retired to his room.

"The preceding three days had proved to me a season of more than ordinary fatigue. My anxiety to pass honourably through the annual examination at Stepney, and the excitement produced by meeting, under such circumstances, with a beloved relative from whom I had been so long separated, had so completely wearied me that I found it no difficult matter to get to sleep; and it was not long before I was uttering aloud in my dreams some mathematical terms. After some time I was awakened by a blow from my cousin's elbow, and an exclamation of 'Holla, Dexter, what sort of stuff is that you are talking?' Having made my apology, he exclaimed with a groan, 'Oh! I cannot dream, nor sleep neither, till I know what is to be done for my poor people in Jamaica. O that I knew how they were getting on! The Lord in his mercy send his afflicted people deliverance.' With ejaculations such as these he continued for some time to pour out his soul; indeed, I fully believe that the whole night was spent by him in fervent prayer.

"At four o'clock he rose, and committed to paper all that he thought necessary to commence his speech with. Having read it to me, he said, 'There! there is no need to write the rest: it is too safely treasured up in my heart to be forgotten.' He added, 'I know that some of my brethren are fearful, from what they call the recklessness of my disposition, that I have not my facts at hand, and arranged in proper order; but I am not afraid on that subject; they are too deeply imprinted on my memory ever to be erased.'"

On Thursday the 21st, the annual meeting of the society was held at Spa Fields chapel, Richard Foster, jun., Esq., of Cambridge, in the chair. After the introductory remarks of the chairman, and the speech of Mr. Kinghorn on moving the first resolution, in neither of which was any reference made to Jamaica in particular, Mr. Phillippo, of Spanish Town, rose, and spoke warmly in favour of sustaining and enlarging missionary operations in that island; but he was as silent as his precursors on the subject of slavery. It was left to Knibb, who immediately followed, to introduce this subject, and he did it without hesitation. From the report of his speech given in the *Patriot*, I select the following passages: —

"Mr. Chairman,—When I inform the present numerous and respectable assembly that I stand before such an assembly for the first time, I feel persuaded that I need not say anything more to secure a favourable and candid hearing. Indeed, the painful circumstances that have forced me from my obscurity, and brought me before you, are so momentous, the cause I have to plead is so important, the embassy on which I am sent by my brother missionaries is so intimately connected with the best interests of 800,000 of our suffering fellow creatures held in the chains of slavery, that an apology from me would be absurd. I deeply feel the momentous responsibility which rests upon me, and which is relieved only by the cheering consideration, that the Avenger of the oppressed and the supporter of the innocent will sustain me. If I ever felt the sentiment of the inspired penman, 'Out of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,' it is now.

"Ere I proceed, I most solemnly aver that, in the disclosures I may make, I am not actuated by revenge towards those who have so cruelly treated me, my family, and my brother missionaries. No: from my heart I feel for them, and pray for them; and much do I adore the divine goodness, that when the bayonet was pointed at my breast, I felt the same sentiment towards them.

"The present assembly will, I am persuaded, pardon me for speaking of myself, when I state that, so fully do I feel the delicacy of my situation, that, did I believe the Jamaica mission could exist without such a disclosure as I am about to make, it should never, by me, be divulged; in that case I would calmly wait the decision of the day of judgment for the vindication of my injured character, and that of my brethren. But I daily and hourly feel that our West India mission, now bleeding at every pore, can never survive without such a disclosure; that the questions of colonial slavery and of missions are now inseparably connected; that British Christians must either join with me in an attempt to break the chain with which the African is bound, or leave the work of mercy and the triumphs of the Redeemer unfinished, and abandon the simple and oppressed Christian slave to those whose tender mercies are cruelty, till death releases him from his miseries, and he enters the mysterious world, 'where the wicked cease from troubling, and the weary are at rest.'

"If it be said, as it may be, that this is a subject at variance with the objects of the society, I answer, that the oppressors of our Christian brethren in Jamaica have forced it upon your attention. Your missionaries sought it not. They strove to prevent it, patiently pursuing their avocation in the religious instruction of the slaves, and they would still have steeled their hearts against the groans of suffering humanity, and have beheld their brethren and sisters chained, imprisoned, and lacerated, for listening to the religious instruction they imparted; supported by the good they were effecting, by the moral verdure they saw springing up around them, by the indescribable affection and kindness of the enlightened slave, by the triumphs of the cross they were permitted to achieve, by the triumphant deaths they were privileged to witness, by the merciful smiles of their God, and by the heart-cheering consolation that the Jesus they preached would, through eternity, make the slave free indeed. I say, we should still have maintained the silence that had been imposed upon us as to civil and political affairs, however enormous, and cruel, and revolting the evils we were compelled to witness, had they not at last deprived us of the privilege of telling the poor, ill-used, and oppressed slave that he would, if a believer in the gospel, spend an eternity of happiness in heaven. But this they have done, and therefore we can be silent no longer. For nearly eight years I have trodden the sun-burnt and slave-cursed island of Jamaica, during which time your gratitude has been often called forth by the pleasing intelligence that God was blessing the instrumentality employed. In almost every part of Jamaica Christian churches have been established, which may vie with any in the world for a devout attendance on the means of grace, and for the simple yet fervent zeal of their members.

"Hill and dale, street and hamlet, have resounded with the praise and prayer of the African who had been taught that Jesus died to save him, and the sweet and simple strains of the many-coloured slave population have often sounded delightfully on our ears. Success has attended your missionaries in a manner which has appeared to promise the commencement of the millennium.

"But I need not say, that all is lost, that our harps are hung upon the willows, and that the voice of praise is no more heard in our streets. A combined Satanic effort has been made to root out all religion; the sanctuaries of God have been broken down with axes and hammers, and the infuriated yell, 'Rase it, rase it, even to the foundations thereof,' has resounded through the island. Feeling, therefore, as I do, that the African and the creole slave will never again enjoy the blessings of religious instruction, or hear of the benefits of that gospel which Christ has commanded to be preached among all nations, and which he has so eminently blessed in Jamaica, unless slavery be overthrown, I now stand forward as the unflinching and undaunted advocate of immediate emancipation. I plead for liberty to worship God on behalf of 30,000 Christian slaves, of the same faith as yourselves; and if the friends of missions will not hear me, I hope that the God of missions will. Having, in his strength, entered on the noble contest, I will never cease to plead for the people I love, till, aided by British Christians and by Afric's God, we wave the flag of liberty over departed colonial slavery, shout with melodious harmony its funeral dirge, and proclaim as we leave the spot in which we have emtombed the greatest curse that has ever stained the annals of nations, 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, and good will to men.'

"Already, in Jamaica, the life-destroying system shakes to its foundation, and the defenders of it are confounded. The passing of the Reform Bill will hasten its destruction; and I trust that Christians will unite with politicians and philanthropists, in giving 'a long pull, a strong pull, and a pull altogether,' so that the earth may be relieved of the curse. . . . And now, my fellow Christians, I appear as the feeble and unworthy advocate of 20,000 baptists, in Jamaica, who have no places of worship, no sabbath, no houses of prayer; and I firmly believe, and solemnly avow my belief, that by far the greater part of those 20,000 will be flogged every time they are caught praying. Among this deeply injured race I have spent the happiest part of my life, and my spirit is there now:

would that I might, under a tree, or on the mountain top, invite them to Christ! I plead on behalf of my own church, where I had 980 members, and 2,500 candidates for baptism, surrounded by a population of 27,000. Their prayers are put up for you; put up yours for them. By prayer we have, by prayer we must, by prayer we will, prevail. God is the avenger of the oppressed, and the African shall not always be forgotten. I plead on behalf of the widows and orphans of those whose innocent blood has been shed. I plead that the constancy of the negro may be rewarded. I plead on behalf of my brethren in Jamaica, whose hopes are fixed on this meeting. I plead on behalf of their wives and their little ones. I call upon children, by the cries of the infant slave whom I saw flogged on Macclesfield estate, in Westmorland. I call upon mothers, by the tender sympathies of their natures. I call upon parents, by the blood-streaming back of Catherine Williams, who, with a heroism England has seldom known, preferred a dungeon to the surrender of her honour. I call upon Christians, by the lacerated back of William Black, of King's Valley, whose back, a month after a flogging, was not healed. I call upon you all, by the sympathies of Jesus. [Mr. Dyer here pulled the tail of the speaker's coat, by way of caution; a hint to which Knibb replied by vehemently exclaiming,—] Whatever may be the consequence, I *will* speak. At the risk of my connexion with the society, and of all I hold dear, I will avow this. If I fail of arousing your sympathies, I will retire from this meeting, and call upon Him who has made of one blood all nations that dwell upon the face of the earth; and if I die without beholding the emancipation of my brethren and sisters in Christ, then, if prayer is permitted in heaven, I will fall at the feet of the Eternal, crying, Lord, open the eyes of Christians in England, to see the evil of slavery, and to banish it from the earth."

During the delivery of this address the auditory were in a state of high, but diversified excitement. Some influential gentlemen on the platform, still disapproving of the introduction of the question of slavery altogether, heard it with undisguised regret; others, who were convinced that it could not be wholly avoided, having implored him to be moderate, were weighing it with evident anxiety; while the vast majority of the assembly received it with ardent sympathy, and testified their concurrence by bursts of loud and long-continued applause. It decidedly gave the tone to the subsequent part of the meeting. Mr. Barry, a Wesleyan missionary, Mr. Stovel, and Dr. Campbell, all reiterated its great principle; Dr. Campbell saying, with a felicitous anticipation, that "that meeting would be celebrated for hundreds of years to come, as a commencement of a new era in the moral history of the world,"

This victory was decisive of the conflict. It was now no longer doubtful in what manner the members and friends of the society at large would receive Knibb's anti-slavery appeal; and it was, consequently, no longer a question whether the committee might safely take a similar course. It had become manifest, not only that they might, but that they must.

At this time of day there can be no doubt that the public were right, and, consequently, that Knibb was so; but the censure which, as the reverse of this sentiment, may seem ready to fall on those who would have kept him silent, may be greatly mitigated, if not altogether removed, by a consideration of their position and circumstances.

It will here be proper to introduce, from the letter of instructions with which Knibb was furnished by Mr. Dyer, on behalf of the committee, an extract defining the course which he was enjoined to pursue respecting slavery.

> "You are quite aware," says Mr. Dyer, "that the state of society in Jamaica is very different from that under which it is our privilege to live in this country, and that the great majority of its inhabitants are dependent upon their superiors in a degree altogether unknown here. The evidences of the fact will probably, especially at first, be painful and trying to your feelings; but you must ever bear in

mind, that, as a resident in Jamaica, you have nothing whatever to do with its civil or political affairs; and with these you must never interfere. Your simple object is, first, to attend to the instruction of the children placed under your care, and then to render such assistance to Mr. Coultart, in his ministerial duties, as may appear desirable, and as may be permitted by the local authorities. These engagements, we conceive, will fully occupy your time and strength, and, in confining yourself to them, as we charge you always to do, you cannot justly incur the displeasure of those among whom you may be placed. The gospel of Christ, you well know, so far from producing or countenancing a spirit of rebellion or insubordination, has a directly opposite tendency. Most of the servants addressed by the apostle Paul in his epistles were slaves, and he exhorts them to be obedient to their own masters, in singleness of heart, fearing God; and this not only to the good and gentle, but also to the froward. Let your instructions, both to young and old, be conceived in the spirit, and correspond with the directions and example, of our Divine Teacher, as laid down in the New Testament at large; and then, whatever disposition may be felt to obstruct or misrepresent you, none will justly be able to lay anything to your charge."

Seeing the issue to which things came, it is surely matter, not of regret, but of high felicitation, that the committee originally assumed a position so absolutely safe and unassailable in relation to the insurrection. Nor can their course be deemed, after all the lights which have been thrown on it, to have been contrary to sound wisdom. At the time the principle involved in the instructions was adopted, it was the only one on which a mission to Jamaica was possible, and there is no proof that even Knibb himself would, *before the insurrection*, have recommended an abandonment of it. Nor was it, indeed, the insurrection itself that changed his views. The turning point with him and his brethren was the determination of the planters, as expressed by the Colonial Church Union, to expel Christianity from the island. Then he said, we must attack slavery.

Was it to be wondered at, that his brethren at home did not leap to this conclusion the very moment it was propounded to them? In a general view, the anti-slavery feeling of the community was far from being, at that period, either so widely diffused or so intense as it became afterwards. Many of those who were subsequently most energetic were then hesitating. And that aged and prudent men, who had adopted a principle with so much solemnity, and acted on it with success through so many years, should have clung to it with some tenacity, and have been somewhat slow to appreciate the circumstances, however extraordinary, which warranted or necessitated its abandonment, will strike considerate persons with little surprise. Greatly to their credit it must be said, that their submission to the public voice was prompt and graceful. Even on the platform of the very meeting at which he had endeavoured to check Knibb's progress, Mr. Dyer, before the close, announced with smiles a suggestion which had been made, that a meeting should be held at Exeter Hall for the fuller development of the subject he had started; and not a word of opposition was, I believe, heard in any quarter afterwards.

On the day following the annual meeting, Knibb met the committee in its capacity for business. Here his first object was to obtain indemnity for his unauthorized return from the sphere of his labours. For this purpose he produced a letter signed by all the other missionaries in the island, recommending this step; and for the reasons assigned in that letter, the committee voted their approbation of it. The consideration of "the various points" connected with his return being then adjourned to a future day, it was moved that he should "visit Bristol, Birmingham, and Liverpool, to diffuse information respecting the state of the Jamaica mission;" and measures were taken for holding the suggested meeting in Exeter Hall.

These arrangements were, in truth, the commencement of a series of public services extending over the whole of the United Kingdom, and through a term of more than two years. His itinerary for this period would be an extraordinary document. In the absence of any such document, I can only indicate in general terms the track he followed. The summer of 1832 was spent in visiting the principal towns in England: Bristol, Liverpool, Manchester, Birmingham, Norwich, Reading, and many others. In October he went to Scotland, commencing his labours at Edinburgh, and pursuing his way through all the principal towns to Glasgow. Leaving Scotland in the latter end of January, 1833, he held meetings in many places in the North of England, such as Newcastle, Durham, and others. In the summer of this year he visited the West of England, including Cornwall to the Land's End; and in January, 1834, he passed over to Ireland, holding meetings at Dublin and other principal towns. The reader will perceive that the places I have mentioned cannot constitute much more than a hundredth part of those which Knibb visited; but I do not know that it is needful to attempt further detail. It is proper to add, however, that, in several of these journeys, particularly those in the North and the West of England, he was accompanied by his beloved brother Burchell, who strenuously and efficiently laboured with him in the same cause.

The matter of his addresses on these multitudinous occasions could not, from the nature of the case, possess much variety. He had everywhere to tell substantially the same tale, and to enforce by similar arguments the same appeal. In looking through his speeches, as either printed in separate pamphlets, or reported by the local press, I find, as must be expected, too much of repetition to supply either material or warrant for extended extract; but a few citations may not be unacceptable to the reader.

The meeting at Liverpool was held on the 24th of July, 1832, at Byrom Street Chapel, E. Cearns, jun. Esq., in the chair. From Knibb's speech, as recorded in the *Liverpool Mercury*, I make the following valuable extract:—

> "He was fully aware of the use made of the decided part which he had taken, and which he intended still to take, on the question of British slavery as it existed in the West Indies; he was fully aware that selfish and interested motives were ascribed to him by those who knew none of a higher nature; he knew it would be said that his conduct in his native country proved that he was a most unfit person to be sent out to communicate knowledge to the slave. But his only answer to those imputations was—prove the fact. When in Jamaica he had a solemn duty to perform, that of teaching the slave obedience to his master and to his God; he had now returned to his native land, and he had another duty to perform,—to plead for his church and for his people, under all the horrors of British slavery as it existed in the West India islands. He stood there, in the land of liberty, in the land of light and knowledge; and to the utmost of his ability he would perform the duty which God had placed upon him, undismayed by the fears of lukewarm and timid friends, or the taunts and sarcasms of those who were interested in the continuance of slavery. With the political bearings of the question he had nothing to do; he had a church in Jamaica bought by the blood of the Redeemer; that church was exposed to all the horrors of slavery. He was sent as an advocate for the suffering, the degraded, the persecuted British slave, who had been robbed of everything which raised man above the brute creation, or gave him a title to rank himself in the human family, and had now been forbidden by men to seek consolation from the Father of mercies, who had made of one blood all the nations of the earth, who desired that every man should come to the knowledge of the truth, and who had commanded them to break the fetters of the

slave, and bid the oppressed go free. In this godlike attempt to rescue the distressed from bondage, to break the fetters of the slave, and to bid the captive go free, all he asked for was justice, sympathy founded upon principle. Long had the politician and philanthropist exerted their energies in this noble cause, undismayed by the threats and the jeers of the interested dealers in human blood; while the Christian world (with the exception of those friends of liberty and humanity, the Quakers) had gazed upon the inhuman monster with almost profound indifference. It was true that they had sent out missionaries, and those missionaries, whilst they were permitted to preach the gospel on any terms, submitted to restrictions which sealed their lips to the sufferings of the slave, and entombed the manly affections of the soul, whilst they beheld their fellow subjects and their fellow Christians exposed to every cruelty which uncontrolled power and unbridled licentiousness were sure to call forth. Even now, cautions as numerous as the sufferings of the Christian slave were presented to him who addressed them on the subject; but he was willing to stand or fall by the side, and to share the fate, of his brethren and sisters in slavery. He was the determined foe of slavery in all its modifications, and branches, and the unbending advocate of the immediate emancipation of the slave, and the extirpation of slavery throughout the world. Slavery had thrown down the gauntlet; proud in its dying strength, it endeavoured to render unavailing the death of the Son of God. In Jamaica it had defied the living God, persecuting his ministers and pulling down his temples; but the stone cut out of the mountain would overthrow it; soon would it fall to rise no more; and then the earth would rejoice, and God would bless it."

The interest excited at this meeting, among a crowded and most respectable auditory, was intense.

The meeting contemplated at Exeter Hall, London, was held on the 15th of August; the Right Hon. Lord Henley being moved to the chair by Mr. Hughes, and the meeting being opened with prayer by the Hon. Gerard Noel. On this occasion Mr. Duncan, Wesleyan missionary, spoke at great length, and in entire corroboration of Knibb's statements. From a pamphlet containing an extended report of the speeches of

Messrs Duncan and Knibb at this meeting, I take the following extracts from that delivered by Knibb. He began thus:—

"After the heartfelt satisfaction of being instrumental to the conversion of the ignorant to the knowledge of the truth as it is in Christ Jesus, there is nothing more delightful than to stand forward as the advocate of the innocent and persecuted; and, when I consider that on the present occasion I appear before an assembly of my countrymen on behalf of the persecuted African, I find in the fact a reward for all the sufferings, in character and person, which I have endured in the cause as a missionary for the last eight years. Having been sent here to vindicate my African brethren and the religious society with which I stand connected, I disclaim all political feeling in the performance of that duty. I look upon the question of slavery only as one of religion and morality. All I ask is, that my African brother may stand in the family of man; that my African sister shall, while she clasps her tender infant to her breast, be allowed to call it her own; that they both shall be allowed to bow their knees in prayer to that God who has made of one blood all nations—the same God who views all nations as one flesh. In what I have to offer to the meeting, I disclaim all personal feeling. What may have been my own sufferings I care not; nor shall I shrink from any additional suffering in the broad and open avowal that my object is to rend asunder the bands of my African brethren. By the blessing of God, I will not stop until I have done what in me lies to accomplish that work; and, if I should die without being permitted to see its accomplishment, I shall at least have the satisfaction of having discharged my duty.

"Having been sent by my brethren to discharge this duty, the slaves shall find in me an unbending friend; and, I repeat, that I will not desist until I have endeavoured to realise my most sanguine expectations. If I should be successful, the weakness of the instrument will more strongly manifest the hand of God; for the work is his, and to him be the glory. The contest which is now going on is a contest between Christianity and slavery. The friends and advocates of slavery have thrown down the gauntlet. They have crossed the path of the friends of the slave, and said 'Thus far shall you go, but no farther.' I have taken an active part on behalf of the slaves; but I now defy, as in Jamaica I have before defied, all and every man connected with the colony—I challenge them generally and individually, as I have done before—to cite any one instance in which I have interfered in the political concerns of the slaves. I engage in their cause as that of humanity and religion —a cause which humanity and religion will I hope soon set right."

Towards the close of his address, after citing the case of Catherine James, he exclaimed—

"Must I not, then, plead for woman? If any one refuse to advocate her cause—if he decline to lift his voice in her favour, in the spirit of the Roman giving his opinion of woman, I say he is less than man.

> 'Vow, at the altar of your household joys,
> Vow, one by one—vow all together—vow
> With heart and voice, eternal enmity
> Against oppression by your brethren's hands,
> Till man nor woman under British laws,
> Nor son nor daughter born within her empire,
> SHALL BUY, OR SELL, OR HOLD, OR BE A SLAVE.'

Those who agree with me, hold up your hands!—*(a great many hands were held up, and thunders of applause resounded through the spacious Hall.)*"

His concluding words were these:—

"If, in the course of my address to the meeting, I have said anything to offend, or to draw their attention from the main objects before them, my subject must atone for it. If the society to which I have the honour to belong object to any opinions urged by me, I cannot help it. If I must speak at all, I must speak the real sentiments of my mind, and those sentiments must, to my latest moment, be uttered against slavery—slavery of every kind—but, above all, slavery of woman. For nearly fifty years has that friend of humanity, Wilberforce, advocated the claims of the oppressed African. Now that he is gathering his mantle around him, and preparing for his entrance into eternity, let the attending angel, as he descends to convey his ransomed spirit to the realms of felicity, whisper in the ears of the departing saint, that 'AFRICA IS FREE!'"

There is no exaggeration in the concluding remark of the pamphlet:—

"To describe the effect of this speech is impossible. The worthy speaker appeared almost exhausted; and the assembled multitude of Christians expressed their abhorrence of slavery, and their approbation of the sentiments so eloquently delivered, in repeated rounds of deafening applause."

When, in the course of the autumn, Knibb visited Scotland, repeating in its capital and in many of its principal towns, the same appalling facts and the same thrilling appeals to which England had so promptly responded, he found a response not less noble. At a meeting in Glasgow, held on the 16th of January, 1833, he thus concluded his address:—

"I have been three months in Scotland, where I was not known before my arrival but as an incendiary and a fanatic; and I shall never forget the kindness and urbanity with which I have been received in every part of the country. Throughout the hills and dales of Scotland I have proclaimed the wrongs of Africa, and everywhere I have met a hearty response. I plead for thousands of the children of Scotsmen in slavery,—children left by their parents, unheeded and disregarded, to all the horrors of West India slavery. I have seen Scotsmen sold and flogged; and when I advocate the cause of the African, I plead their cause. I wish to break the bonds of thousands of the descendants of Scotsmen. I call upon you by all the tender sympathies of your nature—by your patriotism—by your justice, your humanity, and your religion—to unite in a great and holy bond, and never desist till the West Indian slave shall stand forth as free and unshackled as yourselves. I call on children to join in their efforts to relieve from bondage the children of another land. I call on fathers and husbands to unite in the sacred cause, and free the slave from the heart-rending separation of husband and wife, parent and child. I call, above all, on ministers of the gospel to mingle the cause of the oppressed African with the duties of their holy calling, and in the pulpit, as in private, to lift up their voices to God, that this abomination may be washed from the face of the earth, and that freedom may, without delay, be extended to all. In Jamaica they have looked to Glasgow as the great den of colonial slavery. I have been represented in Glasgow as a grave digger; but I have come to dig the grave of colonial slavery, to entomb the greatest curse that ever rested on Britain; and I will not leave off, till the proud flag of freedom wave victorious over the isles of the West; and till I hear them resound with the impressive cry—'Africa is free! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! The Lord God omnipotent reigneth!'"

It will naturally be supposed, that efforts which told so powerfully on the religious and public mind of Britain, were not viewed without anxiety by the West India body, and their then influential and powerful adherents throughout the country. The extracts I have given from his speeches have already supplied indications that the tongue and the pen of calumny were busy; they were, however, powerless. Knibb never permitted them to turn him aside from his great object, and the public sympathized with him too fully to give any heed to them. As an instance of his method of dealing with these petty annoyances, I may adduce the commencement of his speech at Glasgow, a city which was one of the strongholds of the West India interest, and in which strenuous efforts had been made to blacken his character. On rising he spoke as follows:—

"It was with great pleasure that he appeared before them, to propose a petition to both houses of parliament in favour of the immediate and entire abolition of colonial slavery. Perhaps some might expect that he would say something in refutation of those calumnies and aspersions which had appeared against him in the columns of one of the papers of this city, (the *Glasgow Courier*,) but he would not. It was beneath any man to notice any statement whatever that appeared in a paper which nothing noble ever honoured, and which nothing ignoble could disgrace. When he remembered that the attack was made by one who, for the penny and the pay, advocated a system so dishonouring to God and so degrading to man as the West Indian colonial system, he would reply in the words of one of the noblest poets Scotland ever produced,—

'The wretch concentrated in self,
Living, shall forfeit fair renown,
And, doubly dying, shall go down
To the vile dust from whence he sprung,
Unwept, unhonoured, and unsung.'"

The advocates of slavery, however, did not content themselves with calumny. They found a champion, Mr. Peter Borthwick, who, at their call, was willing to wage their battle. This gentleman delivered, in several of the principal towns in England, some lectures in defence of colonial slavery, in the course of which he furiously attacked the character of Knibb, evidently with a view to destroy, if it were possible, his credit and influence with the public. For this purpose he denounced him as guilty of "treason;" he asserted that he was "wandering about the country with a rope round his neck, which justice needed but to grasp for his destruction;" and he got up a variety of charges of a nature certainly sufficiently serious and startling. These charges he reiterated at Liverpool, Cheltenham, Bath, and other places; amusing himself with exclaiming at the close of his lecture, "Where is Mr. Knibb? Why does he not come and defend himself?" Knibb was all this while in Scotland, pursuing the journey of which I have just spoken. The committee, however, under such an attack on their West Indian missionaries, found it impossible to be silent, and they addressed themselves to the inevitable encounter with this resolute adversary. At their request Mr. (now Dr. T.) Price met Mr. Borthwick in the beginning of December, at a public meeting at the Assembly Rooms in Bath, at which Sir Bethell Codrington presided, and at which, after the charges had been adduced on the one part and explained on the other, it was agreed that Knibb himself should confront his accuser on the same platform on an early day. The day first named was the 11th of December; but Mr. Borthwick was then too deeply engaged in endeavouring to secure his return to parliament to make his appearance. A crowded auditory, however, had assembled; and, as they were determined not to be wholly disappointed of their object, they called Mr. Smith to the chair, and requested such gentlemen as were present to go into the charges. The meeting was a most interesting one, and Knibb made one of his most thrilling appeals. An adjournment subsequently took place to the 15th. Then the two champions met; and I must endeavour in a few words to put the reader into possession of the merits of the controversy.

W. T. Blair, Esq., was moved into the chair by Mr. Borthwick. The auditory, which was numerous and highly respectable, was drawn in large proportions from the partizans of the different interests represented, the respective friends of each having gathered around their champion in considerable strength, and all manifesting a lively interest in the issue. After a few appropriate introductory remarks, the chairman called up Knibb, of whose address I shall endeavour to give a general idea. He commenced thus:—

"Mr. Chairman, my fellow countrymen,—I appear before you, on the present occasion, to answer those charges which have been publicly made against me by the accredited agent of the West Indian party, within the walls of this room. I wish, before I commence, to remove an impression which I suspect has been created—that I have frequently been challenged to a public discussion, and that I have refused to meet my opponent. When I was in Scotland charges were made against me, and, through the press, I challenged any man, or set of men, on earth, to come forward like men, and prove the same. When I was at Cheltenham, I as publicly challenged the advocates of slavery there. But it is not to be expected that I can run up and down the land, to meet challenges of which I never hear except through the public prints. Mr. Borthwick would fain have you believe that he has been traversing the earth in search of me, and that I, appalled at the sound of his approach, have fled before him. Had he wished, really wished to meet me, why did he not cross the Tweed? He knew I was in Scotland. One of the most serious charges he brings forward is said to have occurred in Edinburgh; but he knows too well what awaits him there ever to trust himself near Dalkeith. To me there is nothing more delightful than to appear before a British audience, to clear my character from the charges that have been brought against me, and to advocate the cause of the oppressed, the injured, the despised, and persecuted African. Well am I aware of the scorn that will be cast upon my character; well am I aware of the obloquy that will attach to my name; but I fear it not; I have counted the cost; and as long as blood flows through these veins, as long as this heart beats, it shall beat for liberty and for the injured slave."

Some of the charges which Borthwick had brought against Knibb were of the gravest kind, but they were as audacious as they were grave. He had denounced him, for example, as guilty of misprision of treason. When the ground of this charge was demanded, it was laid solely in the allegation that, two or three months before the insurrection, he had said to some negroes, "Did you ever hear the *buckra* (white man) tell you anything that was good?" Ludicrously inadequate as a ground of accusation, the allegation was untrue in fact. What Knibb had said was, "Did you ever hear your *busha* (the superintendent of the floggings) tell you anything that was good?" And the circumstance was as shamefully misinterpreted as falsely cited. The words were used only for the purpose of convincing some negroes, to whom their busha had said that free papers were coming, that there was no truth in the statement.

Borthwick had said that Knibb would have been hung but for the leniency of the planters, and the inadmissibility of slave-evidence. The answer to this was that, in violation of the law, slave-evidence had been admitted against him, and that even with this advantage, the attorney-general threw up his brief in despair.

According to the statement supplied to Knibb, Mr. Borthwick had affirmed that the whole insurrection was planned in a baptist chapel, and by a baptist leader. A part of this allegation Mr. B. now wished to withdraw, asserting that he had not said that the insurrection was planned "in a baptist chapel," but somewhere "after morning prayers at a baptist chapel;" but many persons in the meeting, and on the platform Mr. (now Dr. T.) Price, held him to the words. Not a single part of the statement, however, was true.

Another statement made by Mr. Borthwick was that horrible cruelties had been perpetrated by the black baptists, especially on a young lady; a statement which, being utterly unsupported by evidence, needed no reply.

Mr. Borthwick had searched the speeches of Knibb with no very candid eye, in order to find in them materials for charging him with contradiction or impropriety; and considering the exciting circumstances under which Knibb had spoken, it would not have been surprising if his opponent had reaped some small harvest in this field. The charges thus arising, however, were but two.

The first was that, in his speech at Reading, Knibb had stated that *he had seen* more than a hundred persons hanging on one gallows, whereas he had stated in his evidence before the House of Commons that he had *not seen* many executions. His reply to this consisted in producing the printed report of his speech, and reading the passage alleged, which ran thus, "There have been (not *I have seen*) more than a hundred persons hanging on one gallows."

The second and more material charge of this class was that, at a meeting in Edinburgh on the 19th of October, Knibb had stated that the man who planned the insurrection was a fine negro, and that he deserved an imperishable monument. Knibb demurred to the accuracy of this representation. "I believe I stated at Edinburgh," said he, "that, if Sam Sharp had been a Polish nobleman, and had taken the same measures to free the Poles from the grasp of the Russians that he took to free his countrymen from the grasp of the slave-owner, many in England would have said that, instead of being considered a rebel, he deserved an imperishable monument." So much importance was attached by Mr. Borthwick to the question whether Knibb actually used the words alleged, that he took the trouble to procure two depositions on oath from gentlemen in Edinburgh, Mr. Thomas Duncan and Mr. Archibald Brown, to that effect. To counteract the tendency of these documents, Knibb subsequently obtained letters from five gentlemen, Messrs. Ogilvey, Dickie, Alexander, Ritchie, and Wigham, affirming their belief that the words imputed by the *Edinburgh Evening Post* were not used. The originals of these letters are in my possession, and the letters themselves are printed as an appendix to the report of the proceedings at Bath. Under the circumstances, it is fair, I think, to conclude that Knibb's version of his speech is the correct one, and to hold him responsible for nothing beyond it. The sentiment thus conveyed was little more than the echo of that which had repeatedly burst from the public meetings he had addressed. "Frequently during my tour," said he, "especially in Birmingham, in London, and in Manchester, I have been called to order by the audience for daring, before a British public, to call that man a rebel who only fought for his freedom." With the facts, not merely of universal, but especially of English history before us, it is hard to impugn this sentiment. At Bath Knibb left the matter thus:—"It is asserted that language like this is treason: then try me for treason, and a jury of my countrymen will award me that justice which is my due."

After answering *seriatim* the charges I have enumerated, Knibb concluded this part of his speech in the following terms:—

> "I have now, I believe, answered every charge my opponent has brought against me, and shown their fallacy. My character he has attacked in the most violent manner. Did I wish to retaliate, nothing were more easy. I have been at Dalkeith; I know the tergiversations of Mr. B.; and if he has any regard to himself, I would warn him to let the characters of others alone. I congratulate the West Indians on their champion. Their cause I have no doubt will prosper in his hands. When I think of the petty frauds they indulge to support their death-struck cause, I cannot forbear exclaiming, 'Poor West Indians! Poor West Indians! By the straitness of the siege wherewith your enemies have besieged you, an ass's head is sold for four score pieces of silver, and the fourth part of a cab of dove's dung for five pieces of silver.'"

He then entered at great length into the general questions of the insurrection and the abolition of slavery, winding up with the following peroration:—

> "I call upon you by the tender sympathies of your nature—I call upon you by that manly feeling which Britons have ever expressed—I call upon you by the love of liberty which now animates every breast, to leave no method untried till colonial slavery shall have passed away, and become a tale of yesterday. Already the system shakes to its foundation; the passing of the Reform Bill will hasten

its destruction. It needs but a united effort, (do not the elections show it?) and soon the accursed system will be cast down. Over it we will wave the banner of freedom: our chapels, again erected, shall stand monuments of that freedom; and as we retire from the spot on which we have achieved the greatest victory that ever signalized our land, we will sing, 'Glory to God in the highest; on earth peace, good-will towards men.' The advocates of colonial slavery know well they are not celebrating the triumph of their system, but assisting at its funeral obsequies. The sooner we arrive at the tomb the better, and then with one uplifted voice, and with one consecrated heart, we will exclaim, 'ashes to ashes, and dust to dust.'"

Mr. Borthwick's speech, which followed, was characterized by a distinct abandonment of the heaviest charges he had formerly adduced against Knibb, and by a careful avoidance of the violent language he had employed. "So far as Jamaica was concerned," he said, "he had now no quarrel with Mr. Knibb; his quarrel with him rested entirely and solely on his speeches delivered in this country."

After Mr. Borthwick had spoken, the chairman requested that those who were satisfied with Knibb's explanation would hold up their hands—then the contrary; both exhibitions being large, and received with "immense cheering" by the respective parties. The chairman declared the meeting dissolved; but, as an understanding seemed to exist that Knibb was to have an opportunity of replying to Mr. Borthwick, his friends were unwilling to disperse. After a time, consequently, another chairman, Mr. Hunt, was chosen, and Knibb again addressed such portion of the meeting as remained. Having taken up in his rejoinder the principal points of his accuser's speech, he thus concluded his address:—

"Let all the Mr. Borthwicks on earth try to continue the system of slavery by pleading for gradual emancipation, they cannot succeed. The fiat of destruction against oppression has gone forth; slavery has heard the award of her doom. Attempt to arrest the sun in his course, to stay the wheels of nature, or to dry up the ocean, ere you try to convince a free and enlightened people that slavery is the only blessing that has survived the fall, or that the happiness of a nation depends upon the oppression of man.

"Africa, thou shalt be free! Britons, patriots, fathers, females, join me in my endeavours to rid my country of this Moloch of iniquity! Let not fear, let not scorn, let not danger deter your course. Long-delayed justice demands it—mercy beseeches it—every feeling of humanity urges us forward—and every attribute of Deity is engaged on our side. If we are united, the bonds of the slave will be broken; his fetters will be snapped; the tears of the female African shall cease to flow; the trumpet of Jubilee shall sound; the banner of freedom shall be unfurled, and, beneath its life-giving shade, Africa shall arise and call you blessed. Anarchy and confusion shall be banished from the earth, peace shall be restored, joy shall beam in every eye, happiness shall reign in every heart, and plenty shall open her stores to bless mankind, while the God and Father of the oppressed shall smile upon the work which justice demanded, and which Britain has achieved! Remember that I plead for liberty—for liberty for those who have never forfeited it, and that without this blessing Africa must be miserable. For

'’Tis liberty alone that gives the flower
Of life its lustre and perfume,
And we are weeds without it.'"

A show of hands being now taken, a decided majority appeared in favour of Knibb; a result, however, which is rather to be ascribed to the absence of many of the opposite party, than to any change of opinion on the part of the meeting. Both parties probably were as well convinced at first as at last. The result of this contest was, that while the West Indians substantially rewarded Borthwick, and boasted of his success, his attack on Knibb left no injurious impression on the public mind, and created no obstruction to the progress of anti-slavery agitation. His efforts may be compared to some fragment of a frowning precipice, which, falling with threatening impetuosity into the torrent which rushes below, for a moment adds to the foam, and then finds a peaceful bed beneath the uninterrupted waters.

Knibb's speeches were uniformly so characteristic and powerful, that it would be interesting to take up every single meeting, and dilate upon its particular features. The meeting at Manchester, for example, was excited to an extraordinary pitch of enthusiasm, in the midst of which Mr. Mark Phillips, then member for that town, spontaneously rose, and declared himself convinced by the conclusive statements which had been made. Without possessing much of this kind of anecdote, I have received a few communications which may prove interesting.

The first is from the pen of one beloved by all, Eustace Carey, who was for a considerable period Knibb's companion in travel.

"It was my happiness," says Mr. Carey, "to be the companion of our departed brother during the first and most exciting visit he paid to this country, that which followed the insurrection. One of his first and most influential journeys was into Scotland.

"A strong feeling in the city of Edinburgh had been called into action some few years previously by Dr. Andrew Thompson, in an electrical speech he delivered in favour of unconditional and immediate emancipation. In this attempt he so fully exploded the perplexed and impracticable system of gradual emancipation, by such irrefragable arguments, by irony so scathing, and by eloquence so fervid, that notwithstanding the time which had intervened from its delivery, the effects of it were yet fresh upon the minds of thousands when Mr. Knibb addressed himself to the crowded auditories of that interesting and august city.

"At this time he was comparatively new to the exercise of public oratory, and had some disadvantages to surmount. His manner was not graceful, nor was his diction rich, nor were his words tastefully selected, or always even accurately combined.

His topics were also limited in number, and by their necessarily frequent iteration, and the paucity of incidents used for their illustration, his public exercises in this early period threatened to become trite and wearisome. Scotland at this time contained some interested parties, impregnated with pro-slavery sympathies to an unusual extent; some of these were generally present, listening to his communications, and carping at every sentence as it issued from his lips; whilst misrepresentations of every kind and in every conceivable degree and frequency were not wanting in order to arrest or embarrass him in his career. Things were affirmed by his opposers for which not the slightest foundation existed; while other things were unhesitatingly denied which were of indubitable certainty, but for the confirming of which documentary evidence had to be waited for until it could be fetched from a distance. To this it may be added, that many of the benevolent public, much as they deprecated the existence of slavery, doubted the expediency of immediate and total abolition, and not a few were found who would suspend their judgment and act warily, waiting prudentially to see the issue of the struggle; whilst some again were found, who would fain predict that the ultimate principles he advocated, and the ultra proceedings, as they deemed them, to which he committed himself, might compromise, if not ruin, the missionary enterprise. The missionary brethren in Jamaica likewise were tremulously alive to every point of his public deportment, and to the consequences of his labour to themselves and their anxious flocks. Their personal comfort and the public well-being they felt to be at stake. The interests of myriads would be indefinitely affected by the success or failure of his efforts. He distinctly felt the responsibility, and none, save those who were constantly in association with him, could form any just conception of his occasional depression and anxiety.

"But all which was adverse, and even irritating, and which to minds less simple in their aim, and of less natural and sanctified energy, would have proved hopelessly discouraging, gave greater determination to his spirit, augmented his capabilities for usefulness, and so fired his devout enthusiasm that the most apathetic and speculative, while listening to his irresistible appeals, were roused into feeling and forced into action. I have witnessed congregated masses in that city burning, and almost raving, with indignation at the system, as he depicted its cruelties and demonstrated its crimes. His tact and his self-possession in a little time became so remarkable, that he would easily convert adverse and startling occurrences into an occasion of profit, and even of triumph to his cause. In corroboration of this, I may mention an incident which took place in Edinburgh at this period. One overwhelming congregation had been already addressed by him in that city only a few evenings previously, to which he had expatiated on most of the popular topics embraced in his subject, and when he had pressed into his service most of his principal illustrations. Upon this second meeting one of the largest chapels in the city was so densely crowded that it was difficult to obtain even standing-room. After a very few words of introduction from the chairman, the whole burden of the meeting was thrown, without mitigation, upon him. Before rising to speak, he expressed his sense of extreme embarrassment. This was evinced to a painful degree upon the commencement of his address, and, unless some helpful circumstance had occurred, the meeting must inevitably have proved a failure. When making some statements as to the almost universal neglect of the education of the negroes, and adducing some proofs of the gross injustice and the revolting harshness with which they were treated, a person from the lower end of the chapel cried out, at the utmost stretch of his voice, 'That's a lie!' In a moment the congregation, from being in a state of perfect quiet and silence, rose in excitement and consternation, and a thousand voices exclaimed, 'Up with him to the platform!' An athletic African of amazing size, who was standing in the isle near to the respondent, more earnest than courteous towards him, followed him step by step, allowed him no retreat, nor suffered him to be obstructed by the crowd, but supplied him with all the strength that was needful, and more, perhaps, than was conducive to his comfort, in effecting his progress to the scene of conflict. After some little delay, the gentleman, at the intimation of the chair, stood forth. The spectacle was unusually interesting. Two or three thousand people were now standing in breathless silence, anxious to catch the first words of so bold an antagonist. They were uttered, and were found to be sufficiently adverse to his cause. 'I am,' said he, 'a regularly ordained clergyman of the church of Scotland.' 'More shame for you!' was the loud shout of the assembled multitude. 'I read in my bible,' he rejoined, holding it in his hand, 'Servants obey in all things your masters according to the flesh.' 'The deil can quote scripture as well as you,' was the instant united reply, in true northern brogue, and with a volume of deafening sound that made you, as you heard it, start almost from your seat. After a few seconds of painful and unsuccessful attempt to conciliate the audience to the West Indian colonists by affirming their leniency and benevolence to their slaves, and the desire they evinced for their education and spiritual welfare (of which latter fact he offered an example by a reference to his own labours in a particular estate,) amidst the no very enviable expression of feeling from the congregated and impatient masses before him, he resumed his seat. Our brother's theme for the labour of the evening was now discovered to him, and his materials abundantly suggested. He rose and said, Why did not the reverend gentleman continue reading a little longer? If he had done this, he would have found it written, 'Masters, give unto your servants that which is just and equal, knowing also that you have a Master in heaven.'

"The meeting resolved itself into one of the most interesting and influential he ever held in Scotland, and the effect of it followed to the end of that important itineracy. He encountered no more verbal interruption in any one place throughout the north; the honourable office of defending the slaveholders being referred to the daily press, whose editors seemed nothing loath to assume the task assigned them, and whose earnestness in the cause, when assumed, deserved the cost at which their advocacy was retained, and justified by the confidence reposed in them by their patrons.

"I have already said that our brother in the earliest stages of his progress was the subject of frequent and painful depression. But when in public engagements, he would with surprising ease disengage his spirit from embarrassment and coercion, rise to a pitch of surprising animation, and compel adverse influences to contribute materially to his design upon the public mind. In justice to our brother, however, it is proper to observe, that I remember no instance, either in social intercourse, or in the free and caustic and even withering denunciation of the enemies of the public cause, or in his retorts upon his personal impugners, in which he indulged the slightest approach to selfishness or misanthropy. Such, I believe, and I speak from a somewhat prolonged and close observation of his conduct at the most interesting and trying period of his labours, was the tenderness and native generosity of his heart, that his most bitter enemy, at any moment, might have spared his sympathies, and have commanded his most costly efforts to serve him.

"His benevolence and simplicity combined constituted, as it appears to me, the grand secret of his power. Nor were you indebted for your conviction of his benevolence to anything affirmed directly, or obliquely insinuated in his addresses, designed to conduct the auditor's attention to himself; but were led satisfactorily to infer it from his whole manner, from the incidents that occurred in his daily engagements, from his very tone and spirit, and from the free and unrestrained utterance of his soul in the unsuspecting moments of easy intercourse, both with brethren and with casual associates whose judgment and aim were in consonance with his own, as much as from his avowed purposes and sentiments enunciated in his public addresses. His aim was so entirely the attainment of *one thing*, and his conviction of its importance was so absorbing, that he appeared to be no longer at home than when engaged in its direct and immediate pursuit. In the introduction of other subjects you seldom had the felicity of engaging, except for a short time, his complacent attention. Between long and wearisome journeys, very short periods of respite were found either necessary or agreeable. His physical constitution being unusually hale and vigorous, and his spirits beyond measure buoyant, leisure soon became a tedium, and he would project and commence new engagements with as much avidity as others would display in planning a series of recreative amusements and pleasures. Until this great race was run, and the great battle achieved, he seemed to have neither thought nor time to bestow upon other subjects. Slavery and its details—emancipation and its anticipated consequences, engrossed all his sympathies, and exhausted the whole circle of his energies."

To this from Mr. Carey I may add an anecdote supplied to me by Mr. Saffery, not only pleasing in itself, but explanatory of the process by which his superiority to the irritating power of calumny, often so wonderfully manifested, was sustained. "In the summer of 1834," says Mr. Saffery, "I was travelling with Knibb for the mission. He had been malignantly attacked in a newspaper, in a town we visited. During the night before our meeting there I was attacked with spasms, and after suffering dreadfully from them for some time, I managed to get to Knibb's bed-room, in order to obtain assistance and relief. It was then about three o'clock in the morning, and I was surprised, on entering his chamber, to see him dressed, and on his knees. I immediately retreated; but I had disturbed him, and he followed me. On expressing my regret for having intruded on him at such a time, he said, 'Never mind it. I was anxious to secure some time for prayer this morning. Without doing so, I should be afraid to trust myself to reply to the attack of that newspaper.'"

I cannot pass away from the subject now before me, without presenting to the reader an extract of a letter from Mr. McLeod, of Glasgow, describing the impression which Knibb's appearance and manner made on his mind.

> "When here," says Mr. McLeod, "he seemed, so far as I could see, a man of one idea, as reformers are said to be. Negro emancipation was a ruling passion in his mind. I have, more than a hundred times since, in reflecting on his conduct, wondered at the confidence he entertained of succeeding in that seemingly hard enterprise. Many, and myself among the number, had little faith in the speedy success of the friends of emancipation; and I have often thought how weak and grovelling we must have appeared in the eyes of Mr. Knibb, whose bold and ardent zeal was doubtless animated by a faith with which few, I believe, could sympathize. Have we not reason to think, from the 11th chapter of the Hebrews, that when God raises up men of extraordinary energy to accomplish great things, he still animates and sustains them by a corresponding faith? 'Through faith (they) subdued kingdoms, wrought righteousness, obtained promises, stopped the mouths of lions.' And through faith were not the slaves made free?"

To sum up all. Knibb's visits were everywhere eagerly sought, and eminently acceptable. His vivacity and good nature rendered him agreeable to all. His public addresses had a power altogether overwhelming. Nothing could stand before them. Sceptics were convinced, waverers were decided, the apathetic were roused, and vast auditories were kindled to irrepressible enthusiasm. With perhaps a single exception, the eloquence of no one man made a larger or more distinguished contribution to that commanding excitement of the public mind, before which British colonial slavery at length cowered and fell.*

It was not, however, by his public eloquence alone that Knibb forwarded the anti-slavery cause. In the session of 1832, committees were appointed in both houses of parliament to inquire into the state of the West India colonies, and to report their opinion in relation to the extinction of slavery. These committees were sitting when Knibb arrived in England; and as it was obvious that he must be in possession of much information relevant to the matter of their inquiry, he was summoned to appear before them. By the Commons' committee he was examined on the 13th, 16th, 18th, and 20th of July, his examination occupying the whole of the two days first named; by the Lords' committee he was examined on the 17th, 18th, and 19th of the same month, his examination occupying the whole of the 17th. No one can rise from the perusal of these examinations without a conviction that they were conducted in a most searching manner, and that everything was done which could with fairness be attempted to invalidate his testimony. His evidence, however, was complete and unassailable; and it contributed largely, more largely perhaps than that of any other single witness, to the general impression which then took root in the public mind that slavery must be abolished. For clearness of facts, for goodness of temper, for wisdom of general views, and a happy mixture of boldness and caution, this mass of testimony is to be spoken of in the highest terms.

---

* It is proper to remark, that Knibb, while employing himself principally in the service of the Baptist Missionary Society, frequently attended anti-slavery meetings. At the period of his arrival in England, the Agency Anti-slavery Society had already been formed, and were engaged in a systematic course of appeal to the British public. They solicited Knibb's co-operation; and, to such an extent as was compatible with his other engagements, he readily complied with their request.

In the course of Knibb's examination before the committee of the House of Lords, a circumstance occurred which was truly gratifying to his feelings, and which will serve to show how highly his character was appreciated. He had exposed the gross immoralities committed on many of the estates, and expressed his regret that very frequently these were promoted by the managers of the properties, adding, that he was sure some noble lords could be little aware what was going on upon their properties. On his appearing in the lobby the next day, he was informed that the Earl of Harewood wished to speak to him. On his being shown into a room, his lordship immediately addressed him:—"Mr. Knibb, I have been quite distressed by the account you gave us of what was going on on some of our estates; it has broken my rest. Now, Mr. Knibb, you and I differ on some matters; you are a dissenter and I am a churchman, but I believe you are a Christian, and I trust I am one too. Now be frank with me. Is that the state of things on my estate? If you say it is, I will by the next mail direct the removal of my manager, but he shall never know that it is in consequence of information received from you." Knibb informed his lordship that happily it was not the case on his estate; that his manager was a moral man, and did what he could to promote morality on the estate. "I wish I had known this at the same time with the statement," said the earl, "I should have slept better: but now, Mr. Knibb, give me your hand, and make me this promise, that if, when you return, you find anything of the kind going on upon my estate you will immediately inform me. I shall recognize your initials W. K., that will be quite enough, and I will act upon it immediately, but the man shall never know where I got my information; I know I may rely upon it." Knibb assured his lordship that he should feel it his duty, if he perceived anything of the kind, to inform him, and that he would do so without reserve. Lord Harewood gave him his hand most cordially, and Knibb having been sent for, they both proceeded to the committee-room.

Having already availed myself freely of these examinations in the construction of the preceding narrative, I shall not trouble the reader with an extended account of them. On one point only shall I venture on an extract. Knibb was interrogated at some length as to the substance and manner of his preaching to the slaves, and I think the reader will be gratified by having presented to him the whole of the evidence he gave on this subject. It is as follows:—

"What were the doctrines at all bearing on the temporal condition of the black population, which you inculcated?—I never touched upon the subject in my life.

"In preaching to the slave population, have you not found it very difficult to keep altogether separate the spiritual concerns of that black population from their temporal situations?—It is difficult, but every good man would do it.

"Is it possible, in addressing an unlettered audience, in inculcating the doctrine of the freedom of the faith of Christianity, not to expose yourself to misinterpretation as to temporal freedom, as contrasted with spiritual freedom?—Whenever I have had occasion to speak on that subject, I have explained, that when freedom is mentioned in the word of God, it referred to the soul and not to the body; that there were slaves in the times of the apostles as well as at present.

"In preaching you have touched on this subject?—On spiritual subjects I have preached the whole counsel of God.

"Part of which is the freedom of the Christian?—Yes, the spiritual freedom; but it has been very seldom that I have touched on that point; I have never preached a set sermon on that; certainly I should not keep back anything in the word of God.

"Thinking it your duty to preach the whole counsel of God, part of which you know is the freedom of the Christian in matters of faith, do you not think you must have been exposed to misconception on the part of an unlettered audience, confounding spiritual with temporal freedom; do not you think it natural, or not impossible?—I think the manner in which my congregation acted is a sufficient proof that they did not misunderstand it

"Illustrate that by stating any fact that is within your knowledge, as to no such misconception existing.—Since the rebellion, when I sent for my witnesses, and I sent for the head people from about seventy different properties, I asked them the question, if they ever understood by anything I had said that I had any reference to their temporal condition; they all said no, which would fully have appeared on the trial if I had had the pleasure of being tried, which I should have esteemed a pleasure.

"Have you at all times been most guarded in the selection of the topics upon which you have preached to them?—I have. It is rather delicate for me to speak of myself; but I think if I had not, the efforts that have been made to criminate me would not have so entirely failed. I had one hundred and thirty witnesses, and I stand ready at any moment in Jamaica, to produce one thousand slaves to prove the nature of my instructions.

"You have said you thought it your duty to preach the whole counsel of God; is there not a text of this sort, 'The truth shall make you free?'—Yes, of that nature; but I never preached from it, nor would I preach from it, because the same doctrine might be conveyed from other texts. I never did quote such a passage of scripture in addressing a slave congregation.

"Did you find it necessary to abstain from quoting particular passages of scripture for the purpose of avoiding the exciting any undue feeling in the mind of the negro on the subject of liberty?—I thought it my duty so to do.

"As the slaves who can read having access to these scriptures would naturally find passages of that description, did thev never come to you to ask you questions on passages of that kind?—They never did.

"No inquiries were made with regard to passages of that kind, which occur frequently in the holy scriptures?—No; whenever we received a member in the church we always enforced the duty of obedience to masters, which would lead them to suppose that we considered slavery quite compatible with Christianity.

"You were understood to say that when you preached the doctrine of spiritual freedom, you always endeavoured by explanation to make the slaves understand that what you said did not apply to freedom as distinguished from slavery ?—I used every effort in my power.

"According to your conscientious belief of the doctrines of Christianity, is it possible that you could preach at all without preaching spiritual freedom ?—No; when it is asked whether we could preach at all, I understand to be meant preach the whole counsel of God; I do not mean to say that we could not preach a single sermon.

"Could you possibly administer religious instruction, so as to make the slave comprehend the pure doctrine of Christianity, without preaching spiritual freedom ?—No.

"In your opinion, would not a baptist minister in undertaking to instruct slaves, omitting altogether to speak of spiritual freedom, take away an essential part of its doctrine ?—Most certainly."

I am in possession of very slender private information belonging to the period of which I am now writing. I have, however, one interesting letter, which opens in some measure the secrets of Knibb's heart. It is addressed to Mr. Abbott, then occupying Mr. Burchell's station at Montego Bay.

TO MR. ABBOTT.

"*Beverley, Yorkshire, September* 7, 1832.

"Oh! you can scarcely conceive the efforts that are making to implicate us in the late rebellion, or the falsehoods which are placarded through the streets against us. I have already travelled more than 1300 miles, and have to preach and speak almost every evening. I have been pleading the cause of our poor members in every town where I have been able to speak, and cannot but think it a mercy that I came to England, though I frequently wish the burden had fallen on abler hands.

"The conduct which the coloured inhabitants and others our friends have pursued is received with enthusiasm in England.

When I have mentioned the names of Manderson or Lewin, sounds of deafening applause have resounded through the place. This was especially the case at Exeter Hall, and I much regret that Mr. Lewin's name was omitted by the reporter. While I think of it, give my very kind regards to them both, and tell them I hope to come back, and that before I return I will use every effort to vindicate the aspersed character of the brown free population, and to break the fetters of the deeply injured slave. The people in this land are determined to have the system down. I think if something is not done immediately, it will be *demanded*. The conduct of the whites in Jamaica is viewed by all who are not interested in upholding the accursed system with unmingled disgust.

"Have the kindness to send to my dear flock at Falmouth. My heart yearns over them. Tell them to draw together, to pray much, to love each other much, and in their different situations to act as in the fear of God. O how I long to be among them! The state of the churches here makes me love Jamaica more than ever. I will try and write to them soon, but shall trust to you to comfort their hearts."

From the letters to his wife which were written during this period, and which contain, for the most part, details not requiring insertion here, I take two short extracts, illustrating what, in a somewhat technical phrase, I may call his pulpit experience. The first was written from Edinburgh, the second from Newcastle; but both in the winter of 1832–3: —

"I preached twice on the sabbath in Edinburgh. In the morning I felt very wretched, and could not preach from the subject I had chosen. I took another while the congregation were singing the second hymn, and my Heavenly Father assisted me, though I was so ashamed that I scarce dared look any one in the face. In the afternoon one of the deacons, a very good man, came and told me how much they were gratified, and that they had voted £5 to the mission as a token of their approbation. Thus was God better than my fears. I preached in the evening in the largest place I have ever seen. It was crowded to excess, 2500 being present. The Lord was with me, I hope."

"The continued fights, bustles, and engagements I am called to endure, are very prejudicial to growth in grace. This I feel very much, and often do I long for my quiet home at Falmouth. But this is vain. May the Lord in his mercy sanctify the past, and prepare for the future! I have to preach three times to-day, and have felt very disconsolate the whole morning. Well, my eyes are directed to Him who can give me a word in season; may he in his infinite mercy do so! I do fondly hope that the Lord will yet employ us in his service, but I deeply feel that I am unworthy of the honour, and the mixture of motives I too frequently detect is indeed distressing. 'Search me, O God,' is my oft-repeated prayer. I wish to be chastised in mercy, that I may be saved at last.

"Monday morning. I preached thrice as well as I could, but not very happily. May the Lord humble me, and bless his word!"

The parliamentary session of 1833 was signalized by the discussion and achievement of that great legislative measure, the act for the abolition of British colonial slavery. I find no references of Knibb to this subject until the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, which was held at Spa Fields Chapel, on the 20th of June in that year. On this occasion he spoke as follows:—

"No one but myself knows with what agitated feelings I stood before you at your last anniversary. After much prayer, I felt that, if I did not come forward in the way I then proposed, I should not be happy on my dying pillow. Feeling as I did the rights of the negro, his capacity for improvement, and his steady attachment to the truths of the gospel under heavy persecution, I felt bound to assert his claim to immediate emancipation. The love of fame, and other unworthy motives, have been imputed to me; but I will tell all present that no such motives could have supported me under what I have been called to endure. I had seen the sufferings and heard the groans of the oppressed; I was satisfied that the Christian world alone could relieve them; and I came to ask that relief. I rejoice that in one short year so much has been accomplished. Having now come with you to the tomb of colonial slavery, I desire to bury every grain of animosity to the planter in the same grave with the system itself. Christians, with uplifted hands and voices, may now exclaim, 'Ashes to ashes, and dust to dust,' without a single wish or hope of a resurrection."

At this meeting Mr. Dyer moved, and Mr. Stovel seconded, a resolution to the following effect:—

> "That the most cordial thanks of this meeting be presented to the Messrs. Deleon, of Savanna-la-Mar, to Mr. J. Lewin, of Montego Bay, and to other friends in Jamaica, whose fearless and disinterested advocacy and protection of our injured missionaries have been so honourably conspicuous during the late arduous struggle."

This well merited tribute was carried by acclamation, the whole assembly standing.

The committee had contemplated the return of their intrepid missionary in the autumn of 1833, and he accordingly took leave at this meeting. Their plan, however, was subsequently altered, in consequence of the resolution then taken to press upon his majesty's government the question of restitution for the destroyed chapels. His evidence on such a matter was no doubt indispensable; and on this ground his return to Jamaica was deferred.

Of Knibb's feelings under these circumstances I have a brief record, in several letters to his friend and fellow labourer, Mr. Abbott, from which I make a few citations.

TO MR. ABBOTT.

"*Colne, Essex, September* 15, 1833.

"We have not yet received any definite answer from government respecting the payment of the loss sustained in the destruction of our chapels. I believe that a further appeal is to be made to the colonial assembly; but from that detestable body nothing good can be expected to proceed. I hope that, when it is finally refused by them, every effort will be made to obtain justice at home. Sometimes I think it is necessary for me to remain in England until this question also is disposed of; but in this, and in other matters, I ardently long for a more entire acquiescence in the will of God. I am still journeying on behalf of the mission. I preached twice on Lord's day, and once yesterday, and have to hold forth again this evening (Tuesday); to-morrow and the next day the same work is cut out for me, and I must do my best. What with one thing and another, I am nearly worn out at times; but hitherto strength has been given equal to my day."

TO THE SAME.

"*Lincolnshire, October* 28, 1833.

"I deeply regret to state that the committee have determined upon my remaining in England some time longer, that I may, if needed, give evidence before the Commons, should they entertain the subject of the rebuilding of our chapels. Whether they will or not, is I fear doubtful; but an effort will be made to induce them to do so."

TO THE SAME.

"*London, November* 29, 1833.

"I have had an interview with Dr. Lushington on the present state of the Jamaica mission, and on the probability of redress from government for the losses sustained. I am grieved to say that it was far from satisfactory. The West Indians, I fear, have poisoned the mind of Stanley against us; and I have my fears that Lords Mulgrave and Seaford, with Messrs. Miller and Barrett, have represented that the crushing of the baptists is necessary to the peace of the colony. We have lost a sincere friend in Lord Goderich; and I fear we have yet a battle to fight, to rescue either our own, or our friends' characters from unfounded accusations or slanders. A few weeks, however, will decide this matter. If the government refuse our just claims, it is our intention to make an appeal to parliament and to petition the House for remuneration. I shall watch the proceedings with much intensity of feeling; and will, as opportunity may occur, transmit to you, and through you to my dear people, our prospects, our hopes, and our fears."

His fears, which had been shared by many, were happily disappointed. The whole loss incurred by the destruction of chapels had been stated at £17,900.

Taking some ground of distinction among the items of which this sum was composed, the government expressed their willingness to recommend to parliament a grant of £5510; and they held out reason to hope that, if the society would raise half the remaining balance of £12,390, they might eventually recommend the granting of the other moiety. Without stopping to argue the justice of such a proposition, the committee at once accepted it. Mr. Dyer received it in an interview with the secretary of state on Wednesday afternoon, June 18, 1834; he communicated it to the committee, specially summoned for the purpose, on the morning of the 19th, immediately before the annual meeting; and within an hour afterwards Knibb was at Spa Fields Chapel, moving a resolution for carrying it into effect.

The proposition was received by the country, not merely with cordiality, but with enthusiasm; and it gave occasion to one of the most remarkable displays of Christian liberality ever witnessed. The day fixed for bringing in the various amounts collected was the 7th of August. The meeting was held at the City of London Tavern, and was altogether of the most gratifying description. How I long to insert the whole account of it here! But I forbear, for I have to exhibit but one man. It must suffice for me to say that the amount then announced was nearly ten thousand pounds: an announcement "on which an expression of astonishment and delight burst from the whole assembly." "The voluntary principle!" exclaimed the chairman. "The grace of God!" rejoined the secretary. But there was no contradiction; they were both right. The contribution actually rose to £13,000.

On this interesting occasion Knibb was presented with a bronze medal, which had been struck in commemoration of the abolition of slavery; and from the address which he subsequently delivered—it was his farewell—I make the following extracts:—

> "It is with feelings which can be more easily conceived than expressed that I rise to address the friends whom I love, and from whom I must soon be separated, to meet only in the larger assembly of eternity. Powerful emotions come over me. I can scarcely conceive that I stand in London, to celebrate the achievement of the greatest object in the world. With the most heartfelt joy I return thanks to my friends for the labours in which they have been so assiduously and so successfully employed. I am glad the missionary committee determined that their cause should die rather than slavery should remain. It should be remembered that slavery first made an attack upon us. We did not attack slavery, though perhaps it was our duty to do so. I defy any one to prove that a missionary ever uttered a word in the island against slavery. Slavery crossed our path with its instruments of cruelty and blood. Christianity gazed upon it with meek eyes and sorrowful demeanour; but, when slavery presumed to attempt her extinction, she raised her arm, and slavery fell beneath the blow. . . . When I left Jamaica, it was proclaimed that, so long as those men lived, Knibb should never preach to their slaves again. That will be true. I shall not preach to them as slaves, but as free men. The glory of the second temples will be greater than that of the first, for in them a slave will not set his foot. . . . I will now bid you farewell. In a few days I expect to leave you; and I leave you assured that you will not desert the good cause. I love you much, but I love Jamaica more. And if my labours are so blessed to the sons of Africa as to cause them to go forth to their countrymen with the glad tidings of salvation, then I shall think that Africa is about to be repaid for all her wrongs."

The reader will observe in the last sentence of this speech, the idea which afterwards developed itself into a plan for a mission to Western Africa, of which he will shortly hear more.

During the month of July an inclination was felt by the committee to detain Knibb for a still longer period in England; his immediate return, however, being ultimately determined on, he sailed with his family in the Antæus, on the 27th of August.

The period of this visit to his native country was marked by domestic changes.

In October, 1832, there was added to his family a second son, to whom he gave the name of Andrew Fuller. This child was born at Bristol, and lived but a short time. He died at Kettering, on the 25th of January, 1834, and was buried in a grave adjoining that of the illustrious man whose name he bore.

About the period of this increase, his family was threatened with a diminution by the dangerous illness of his eldest son. Several of his letters to his wife contain references to this dispensation. In one of them he says—"Respecting William, surely the bitterness of death is past, and hopes may be entertained of his recovery. What a mercy, however, to be prepared for all the will of Him who is too wise to err, too good to be unkind. Were he taken now, I should have a pleasing hope, I think, of his eternal safety, on the ground of his youth; but this is a mysterious subject, fitter for prayer than speculation. O that God may prepare us for all his will, and teach us to live more entirely to his glory!"

I find also a letter to his brother Edward, dated Norwich, August, 1832, containing a fervent and affectionate appeal on the subject of personal piety. He must have been at Norwich at this period on his great missionary and anti-slavery tour; and it is very pleasing to know that, amidst the excitement and fatigue of such a journey, he could find both the time and the heart to write such a letter. It is a highly interesting display of the domestic affections, and more particularly so as it adverts to the death of his mother. It is the only reference to this event which I have observed in his correspondence. From the letter I give the following extracts.

TO HIS BROTHER EDWARD.

"*Norwich, August* 28, 1832.

"When I was traversing the great deep, I spent a portion of my time in entreating of my Heavenly Father that my visit to my native land might prove a blessing to my beloved relations. I did not then know that the partner of your joys and sorrows was a disciple of the lowly Jesus; and my mind frequently adverted to the influence she might have in forming your character. Delighted was your brother to find his fears removed, and to see in her the Christian, and thus an emblem of her who brought us forth. But has my dear brother made a public profession of Christianity? Have you yet devoted yourself entirely to the service of the Redeemer? I do not ask you, are you a baptist? No: if a Christian in the gospel sense of the term I am satisfied, and my heart shall rejoice, even mine. In keeping the commands of God there is great reward. One of those commands is that his people come out from the world, and be separate from it; and the delightful promise is, 'I will receive you, and will be a Father unto you.' I am well aware that much watchfulness, much examination of heart and motives, much earnest prayer, is necessary in so important a step; but yet, if you feel the love of Christ, if your soul is inspired with the pleasing hope of heaven, if you have felt the plague of your own heart, the emptiness of the world, and the necessity of the Holy Spirit to guide, to cheer, and to counsel you, then go to the people of God, and say, 'This people shall be my people, and their God shall be my God.'

"I often dwell upon the painful thought, that very few *families* will meet in heaven; and I ask, will ours? We have a mother, a brother, and some of our little ones there; but where is our father? —Ah, where? The pen refuses to say, what conscience knows must be the awful fact. He had his convictions, strong ones—my mother has often told me so—but he stifled them. He drowned his reason in the intoxicating fumes of the convivial party, and his conscience became hardened in sin, and he died as the fool dieth. Ah! 'tis bitter; 'tis bitter. It is an awful thing to trifle with convictions, lest God should say, Let him alone! And where are my beloved brothers? Are they all walking in the fear of God? Ah, no! They are kind to me, they love me, but they love not my Jesus. This I hope you do; but I long to see you a devoted Christian, and it would afford me sincere pleasure to learn that all the family were as I am, except the odium which I bear.

"As a family, we have enjoyed many advantages. Our dear mother's prayers have been incessant on our behalf, and much, very much, will be required of us; verily God hath not done so with any family, but as for his judgments we have not known them. But she is gone. No more she bends her sainted form at the throne of mercy for us, no more pours out her cries to God for her children. She is gone. Heaven hath received her ransomed spirit, and, with her beloved Thomas, she sweetly rests in the embrace of the Eternal. Let us, my dear brother, follow her."

CHAPTER XI.

THE STATE OF THE CHURCH AT FALMOUTH FROM THE INSURRECTION UNTIL HIS RETURN IN 1834.

THE feelings of the slaves on the demolition of their places of worship may be more easily imagined than described. "I shall never forget their tears," said Knibb before the parliamentary committees, "and the emotions they felt in having their chapels destroyed." "Several of them came to me, saying they had been told they were not to pray again, and asked me if it was true." The congregation at Falmouth soon began, however, to gather themselves together for conversation, if not for worship. On the 16th of April, 1832, they addressed a letter "to the friends and fellow Christians in Great Britain," which affords a view at once characteristic and agreeable of their condition and their spirit. It is as follows:—

FROM THE BAPTIST CHURCH AT FALMOUTH TO THE FRIENDS AND FELLOW CHRISTIANS IN GREAT BRITAIN.

" *Falmouth, April* 16, 1832.

" We doubt not, ere this, you must have heard of the distressed state of the missionaries and churches in this island.

" Immediately after the breaking out of the late rebellion, our church in this place was levelled with the ground, our minister was torn from us, and taken to prison, at a time when not the least shadow of a charge was brought against him. He humbled himself, he suffered imprisonment, not because he was guilty, but for the sake of Him who died to save a perishing world. Within the last three months we have endured persecutions of every description. We have been deprived of the public means of grace; sabbath after sabbath no place of worship to go to; no minister to unfold to us the words of eternal life. Many of us for years gone by were in the habit of going to the established church of England, but were ignorant of the one thing needful, and would have been in gross darkness, were it not for the preaching of dissenting ministers; many of us had a name to live when we were spiritually dead; we had the name of Christians when we were strangers to vital religion.

" We love all Christians, of whatever denomination or name they may be called, that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity and in truth; we as a church, therefore, beg and entreat that the friends will leave no means untried for the promotion of the Redeemer's kingdom in this unsettled land. We know that our pastor did all that lay in his power to quell the recent rebellion, and we are confident that the head and front of his offence is, for preaching the gospel. He never shunned to declare the whole counsel of God. He never hesitated to say that all men by nature are sinners in the sight of God, whether rich or poor, high or low, profanation of the Lord's day, &c. &c.; these doctrines are too humbling for the Jamaica nobles. Look at the different resolutions that have passed in the different parishes, for the expulsion of the sectarian missionaries from our land. What can we expect from such men as those who compose the Colonial Church Union ?

" In April, 1832, our church in this place consists of 885 members; we are now wandering like sheep without a shepherd. We trust that the friends in Great Britain will assist us in our great troubles, that we again may have a house erected for the worship of the living God, and that we may again be enabled to have him who has been labouring among us for more than two years. He has been a friend to the destitute, a counsellor in all our distresses, a faithful and affectionate pastor."

The nearest missionaries deeply sympathized with their destitute brethren at Montego Bay and Falmouth, and made the earliest practicable efforts for their religious welfare. It was not, however, till the beginning of the year 1833 that the subsidence of hostile feeling permitted any attempt to be made. At that period Messrs. Nichols and Abbott, having visited Montego Bay, and encountered persecution even to imprisonment there, made their way also to Falmouth. Here, after some difficulty, Mr. Nichols obtained leave to preach to *free* persons, and he held the first public service after the insurrection on the 10th of February. Destitute as they were of a place of worship, the congregation continually increased; so that, shortly afterwards, Mr. Abbott wrote to Mr. Dyer in the following cheerful terms:—

TO MR. DYER.

"Last sabbath I spent a most delightful day at Falmouth. I was favoured with everything calculated to cheer a missionary's heart, except a commodious place of worship. I had an overflowing congregation; a spirit of prayerful attention to the word was manifested; and I was rejoiced beyond measure to see that many backsliders had returned, to 'learn how freely Jesus can forgive.' You have already been informed of the difficulty of procuring a house at Falmouth. During my last visit there I used every effort in my power to obtain one, but I regret to say without effect. So strong is the current of prejudice against us, that although several persons have houses untenanted, none will let one to us. When I tell you that the place (belonging to one of our members) in which we have held our services hitherto is no more than seven feet high, and consequently exceedingly distressing to the speaker, as I know by experience; that it is capable of seating only two hundred persons, while there were at least five hundred present last sabbath, many of whom were, during the whole of the service, exposed to the rays of a nearly vertical sun, and others, by seeking shelter at a greater distance, could not hear that word of which they had been so long deprived, and to hear which they had travelled so many miles; you will be satisfied that I adopted the only alternative I had, in coming to a determination to build. The members whom I met at the close of the forenoon service, were unanimously of opinion that a more commodious place must be obtained; and, as a house was not to be had, it was resolved that a large room should be immediately built on the chapel ground, at a convenient distance from the ruins, so that when the chapel shall have been rebuilt, it might be easily converted, by means of a partition, into a school-room and vestry; the room to measure forty-five feet by thirty-five, all of wood."

The renewed preaching of the gospel at Falmouth gave great joy to Knibb's affectionate heart; not exclusively, however, on account of the dispersed flock to whom the gospel was dear, but on account also of the persecutors who had driven it from them. In a letter to Mr. Abbott at this period he says, "The forbearing goodness of God is indeed seen, in permitting the chapel-destroyers to hear the sound of the gospel. O that it may penetrate their hearts, and reform their lives! Then indeed will the triumph of mercy be complete."

A general meeting of the missionary brethren being held at Kingston, on the 5th of July, 1833, the state of the more destitute districts was taken into consideration, and they recommended Mr. Dendy to vacate his post at St. George's for a time, in order to repair to the north-west. Mr. Dendy accordingly removed to Falmouth (where, however, at that period, no one would rent a house to a baptist), and commenced his ministerial labours there on the 6th of October. The shed was now found to be too small, and as a means of sheltering the people from the burning sun-beams, the boarding on one side was removed, and an awning erected, 45 feet in length by 15 feet in breadth. The Sunday-school also was successfully recommenced.

In this pleasing state affairs continued when the ever-memorable 1st of August, 1834, the day of partial freedom, arrived. It was set apart as a day of thanksgiving. Six large shutters had been cut out of the building, that persons on all sides might participate in the proceedings within it; and the people collected nearly sixty pounds towards the re-erection of their chapel. Not less than 1600 persons attended these services, the greater part of them seeking such accommodation as they might obtain under trees and temporary awnings. The day passed off in a perfectly orderly manner. There was joy, but no riot, nor even noise—a fact with great justice ascribed to the influence of the gospel, and that of the persecuted men who had preached it.

Mr. Dendy took this opportunity of making known to the people the resolution of the British and Foreign Bible Society to present a copy of the New Testament, with the Psalms, to those apprentices freed slaves who either could read, or whose children were learning to read; and those who could claim the gift came forward with eagerness to have their names entered for the purpose.

The following animated account is given by Mr. Dendy, of the scene presented on the following sabbath:—

> "On the following Lord's day, Jamaica witnessed such a sabbath as was never before seen. In going to and from our place of worship, the eye was no longer pained, or the heart grieved, by seeing country people with their baskets of provisions on their heads for sale, or by beholding open stores and shops for the vending of different commodities; all was quietude and repose, and naught was to be seen but decently dressed people going to and from different places of worship. Our building, at the six o'clock

early prayer-meeting, was overflowing; at half-past ten there were more people than on Friday, August 1st. There could not have been less than eighteen hundred present. Three parties of Sunday-school children, amounting to about one hundred and twenty, were removed to friends' houses, with a teacher or two to each division, during the service; yet, notwithstanding our two awnings and a booth erected the preceding day, many people and children were seated under the trees, or upon the ruins of the old chapel. Our place is indeed too strait."

That the people of his charge had been affectionately and solemnly thought of by their absent pastor cannot be doubted. To the incidental evidences of this which his correspondence affords, a more direct proof may be added in a letter which he addressed to them from Salisbury, on the 17th of November, 1833. It is as follows:—

"TO THE BAPTIST CHURCH IN FALMOUTH.

"*Salisbury, November* 17, 1833.

"MY DEAR FRIENDS,—Till within the last few days I had fondly hoped that ere the receipt of this, I should have been among you, for the purpose of again ministering unto you in holy things. Circumstances, however, render my stay in England for a time necessary; and I therefore address this letter, that you may hear of my welfare, and that in your reply my heart may be comforted, by hearing that you are walking in the fear of God, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost.

"Though I have not received any direct communication from you, it has rejoiced my soul to learn that you have the ordinances of God's house once more as your portion. Prize them highly, and endeavour to improve under them. Let your prayers daily ascend to God, that he would sanctify the word to your souls, and to the conversion of those who yet know not God, and who obey not the gospel of his Son. Most affectionately would I press upon you the duty and the importance of prayer; without it, you can never thrive in the way to heaven; with it, you are sure of the blessing of God. Guard, I entreat you, against falling out one with the other, and cultivate much of the spirit of love. Be anxious to attend the means of grace whenever your duties will permit. Live near to Christ, and heaven is yours. Daily add to your faith virtue, and to virtue every grace that adorns the Christian. I cannot exactly say when I shall return, but I will inform you as early as I have opportunity. The cause of my stay is on your account. It is supposed that I shall be needed to appear before parliament, in the hope of procuring money to re-erect the chapels that have been destroyed; therefore, as it is on your account that I remain, I do confidently hope that you will testify your love to me, and your gratitude for my exertions on your behalf, by frequently meeting to pray that God would bless my humble exertions, and restore me to you in the fulness of the blessing of the gospel of peace.

"I know that it will please you to learn that Mrs. Knibb and the children are in health. She often thinks of you, and prays for you, and it will afford her much pleasure if she finds that you all, and especially the female part of the church, are living as becometh the children of God. Remember, that when your religious privileges are granted you, God will expect much more from you. When you have more time to serve him, he will expect more devotion to his cause. In all probability some of you will die before my return; see to it, that I meet you with joy at the right hand of God. That will compensate for all our trials on earth.

"Daily do I think about you, daily do I pray for you. My happiness is bound up in your welfare. The knowledge that I am serving you in England makes me regret the less the separation I am constrained to endure; and O may the God of all mercy grant, that when I do see you, my heart may be gladdened by beholding your steady attachment to Jesus, and your daily attention to all his commands.

'Such is your faithful pastor's charge,
Whose soul desires not yours, but you;
O, may he there, at God's right hand,
Himself and all his people view.'

"Let me hear soon of your welfare. Remember me to those country members who are not present when this is read, and tell them to watch and pray.

"That God in his infinite mercy may bless you, and bring you at length to his heavenly kingdom, that he may sanctify all your trials, and heighten all your joys, is the earnest prayer of

"Your very affectionate pastor,

"WILLIAM KNIBB."

CHAPTER XII.

FROM HIS RETURN TO JAMAICA IN 1834 TO THE ERA OF FREEDOM.

WITH the usual variations of storm and calm, Knibb and his family reached Jamaica in safety, and landed at Port Maria on the 25th of October, 1834. In a letter to his brother Edward, he thus notices some of the incidents of his progress:—"On the former part of our voyage we had baffling southerly winds, which took us far to the north, and thus we escaped a hurricane which has desolated one of the Windward Islands, and done much damage to others. Thus God prevented us with his mercy. We called at the island of St. Thomas, and anchored in it. Here I saw an accursed slave-ship, and my heart sickened at the sight."

In a letter to Mr. Dyer he states the following particulars:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, November* 18, 1834.

"During the voyage I enjoyed much of God's presence, and, I hope, of his blessing. The sailors attended the means of grace on the Lord's day, and read with apparent pleasure the tracts we distributed among them.

"I believe you are aware that the captain took out his family. One of the number, the eldest daughter, died on the passage. The parents had spared no pains or expense in the decoration of her person, or the formation of her mind, and really she was a lovely, interesting creature; but she had not known Jesus. A rapid consumption seized her, and in a few weeks terminated her mortal career. I embraced every opportunity of conversing and praying with her, and never shall I forget the intense anxiety she manifested to hear and know the truth. I do hope, though I know the too frequent fallacy of death-bed repentances, that pardon and peace were hers. Often did she thank me for the advice I gave, and express her thankfulness to God that she had been brought where she could hear the truth; and I cannot but view it as one of the particular instances of the goodness of my Heavenly Father, that I was, in so remarkable a manner, made the instrument of directing her to that Saviour in whose presence, I trust, she is now rejoicing. On my arrival at Port Maria, I committed her remains to the silent tomb, there to rest till the resurrection morn."

Knibb's return to the scene of his labours in Jamaica at this period was by no means an ordinary event. He had been personally the object of bitter hatred on the part of the dominant portion of the community there. They had used their utmost efforts to expel him ignominiously from the island, and they had avowed their determination that he should never return. He was moreover the representative of a hated system, which seemed to them to find its animating principle in his ardent energy, and which they thought they could destroy by driving him from their midst. To the slaves, on the other hand, he had been as the sun of their hope. With him all their prospects of good had been identified, and all had been lost in his loss. His return to the scene of his labours and sufferings was, consequently, an occurrence deeply interesting to both parties, a source of joy and triumph beyond expression to the one, and of intense mortification to the other. There was more, however, to nourish these sentiments than the mere fact of his return. It was not only that he came back in spite of his planter adversaries; during his absence he had successfully grappled with their cherished system of oppression.

In driving him to England, they had conducted him to the very spot where he could do them the greatest mischief. For their own purposes, they would have done much better to keep him in Jamaica. They had flung the firebrand from their hearths, and it had fallen on the powder magazine. He had fought them on the ground they had chosen for him, and he was now returning as a conqueror. It was inevitable, therefore, that his arrival should create much excitement, and the reader will not be surprised at the details which follow. They are taken from the letter last quoted.

"As soon as the boat could be made sea-worthy we embarked for Rio Bueno, which we reached in safety the same evening.* On entering this lovely little bay the first object that attracted my attention was the ruins of the chapel, in which I had many times proclaimed the words of eternal life. There they stand, a monument of the shame of Jamaica slave-drivers. But the person who set fire to the chapel is beneath the clods of the valley. Shortly after this transaction he left his home for a ride, was missed for two days, and was then accidentally discovered by a negro, hanging between two rocks, quite mad. He was carried home, and he died in the same state.

"The people saw me as I stood on the deck of the boat. As I neared the shore I waved my hand, when they, being fully assured that it was their minister, ran from every part of the bay to the wharf. Some pushed off in a canoe, into which I got, with my family, and soon landed on the beach. We were nearly pushed into the sea by kindness. Poor Mrs. K. was quite overcome. They took me up in their arms, they sang, they laughed, they wept, and I wept too. 'Him come, him come, for true.' 'Who da come for we king, king Knibb. Him fight de battle, him win de crown.' On they rushed to the chapel, where we knelt together at the throne of mercy. On the following morning we started by land for

---

* "I had sent an express by land to inform the people of my arrival. The pilot, who is one of the members of the church at Rio Bueno, had been stationed on the top of a high hill nearly all the day, with his glass, and about four in the evening he told the people that a boat was standing in for the harbour. About five we rounded Dry Harbour bluff-head, and stood right in for the harbour." *Letter to his brother Edward.*

Falmouth.* The poor people in the pass all knew me, and had I stopped to shake hands with all, I should have been long on the road. As I entered Falmouth I could scarcely contain my feelings; nor can I now. I was, and am, completely overcome. They stood, they looked. 'It him, it him, for true. But see how him stand! Him make two of what him was when him left.' Soon the news spread, and from twenty to twenty-five miles' distance they came. 'Now, massa, me see enough. Him dead, him live again. God bless you, massa, for all the good you do for we. God him too good.' When told to go, in order to make room for others, 'He! make me hab belly-full of massa.' In the evening we had a prayer-meeting, and the chapel was crowded. As I set my foot on the threshold they struck up unexpectedly,

'Kindred in Christ, for his dear sake,
A hearty welcome here receive."

"† On the sabbath day, when the people could come from the country, the scene was the most interesting I ever beheld. At six in the morning the place was full; at the ten o'clock service numbers were on the outside. The magistrates were present. I preached as well as my feelings would allow, and afterwards I addressed the people on the change in their circumstances. O the happiness of having the tongue set free from the shackles of slavery! I am sure you will excuse my feelings. It was a noble sight! They were as still as death. I urged upon them the duties they would have to perform, and told them I was sure they would fulfil them; and I am of that opinion still, though many efforts are made to make them discontented. I showed them the specimen testaments I had brought, and distributed several hundred tracts in commemoration of the day. Heartily did I wish that the committee of the Tract Society could have enjoyed the scene. The avidity with which the tracts were sought was equalled only by the pleasure with which they were bestowed. When I descended from the pulpit they could contain themselves no longer, and the magistrates had a good specimen of the manner in which 'the notorious Knibb' was received by his people. In the afternoon we celebrated the Lord's supper. About four hundred of the members sat down, and it was indeed a feast of love.* After the service two African women came to me, each with an infant born after the first of August. When they presented their children, and thanked me for their freedom, my feelings were completely overcome. I left them, and retired to weep."

---

* "Mrs. Knibb had suffered so much from sea-sickness that I was afraid to go farther in the boat, so having procured a couple of gigs, with horses, we started early in the morning for Falmouth, which we reached somewhat after nine o'clock. I have been thankful since that I thus acted, as my friends had intended to have given me what they call a triumphant entrance from the wharf, which I happily avoided. When I came within a mile of the town my feelings were quite overpowered, and it was with some difficulty that I could drive. Every tree, every stone had the freshness of yesterday. However I got safe through the streets, and landed at brother Dendy's hospitable abode, Such a scene I never saw, and perhaps never shall again." *Letter to his brother Edward.*

† "Very soon the country people heard that minister was come, and in the course of the week they came, some ten, and others twenty miles, to bid me welcome, bringing small presents of coffee, yams, cocoa, pine apples, &c. &c., till the sabbath morning dawned." *Ibid.*

Nothing can be written with greater simplicity than this narrative, and nothing can be more fitting than that the circumstances it details should be placed on public record. The reader will nevertheless appreciate a remark which the writer makes at the close of his letter. "I have written thus freely," says he, "because I thought it would please some of the friends who know me, to whom it may be read; but, if you print any part of it, please expunge those statements which may savour of egotism."

The enthusiastic reception which was given him by his people contrasted strongly with the sullen amazement and cowardly slanders of his former enemies. On this subject I make the following extracts, the one from his letter to Mr. Dyer, the other from that to his brother. "The filthy Jamaica papers, as you would expect, are loud in their abuse, which troubles me just as much as it does the man in the moon. No one has said a disrespectful word *to me*, though many, I believe, talk very loudly behind my back." "When I walk the streets they stare most profoundly, and I believe can scarcely believe their eye-sight. At present I have not met with the least symptom of interruption, though the low-bred editors of our filthy papers are sending forth their venom against me. It is really amusing that they should take so much notice of a man, for whom they say they entertain the most profound contempt. Well, let them have their day, and when they are tired they will cease."

---

* "It was a solemn, a joyful scene. Most were in tears. The thought of former times, the view of the ruins of the chapel, the trials through which they had passed, lovely freedom smiling in all her native joy, together with the pleasures connected with this feast of love, produced sensations in my mind which time will never fully efface, and which the pen cannot describe." *Letter to his brother Edward.*

Knibb had the happiness of finding the church at Falmouth in a condition of spiritual prosperity, and in the letter to Mr. Dyer which I have just quoted he thus expresses his grateful sentiments:—" I must express to the committee the gratitude I feel for the services of brother Dendy. The church is in peace, harmony, and love; while his unremitting exertions have, under the blessing of God, been eminently blessed."

With a view to the temporary accommodation of his people during the erection of the chapel, he had taken out a large tent, which had been handsomely presented to him by W. B. Gurney, Esq. Of this he made prompt use; and he gives the following account of the success of the experiment:—" Last sabbath the tent was rigged, and answered well; though it rained on it for two hours the wet came not through, and the people sat quite dry. I did long that the kind donor could have seen it, with those who had walked nearly twenty miles sitting beneath it sheltered from the rain. I am sure it would have fully recompensed him for the cost he incurred."

Knibb threw himself instantly into the midst of his work. His first object, of course, was the erection of a new chapel at Falmouth, towards which the committee had made him a grant of £3,000. On this subject he thus speaks to Mr. Dyer, on the 24th of November:—"The congregation now at Falmouth, brother Dendy says, is often 1,800, so that I have resolved to build the chapel seventy-five feet by fifty-five, with deep galleries. This, without school-rooms, will cost at least £6,000."

The edifice was commenced on the 10th of February, 1835, the anniversary of the death of Mr. Mann, the former pastor of the church. This was without design; not so that which followed. The foundation stone was laid on the 14th of the same month, the anniversary of Knibb's release from confinement on bail, three years before. There was of course a great gathering, and the greater as the day was Saturday, "when the country people could come." The half tent was erected as a canopy for the platform. After devotional and hortatory exercises conducted by Messrs. Hutchins, Burchell, and Tinson, Messrs. Dendy and Knibb laid the stone, depositing in its cavity the proper historical documents and coins, and together with these, the medal which had been presented to him at the City of London Tavern, on the 7th of August, 1834. The collection amounted to more than £70 sterling. "I then," says Knibb, in his account of this proceeding, "addressed the multitude assembled, urged upon those who were emancipated an attention to their duties, and having, as I thought, a fit opportunity (two or three magistrates being present), assured them that I was still the foe of slavery and the friend of the oppressed; and that, while they acted right, I would defend them, let the consequences to myself be what they might."

As the building approached its completion it became necessary to take down the shed which had been erected for temporary use; and the congregation being thus without a place of assembling, application was made for the use of the court-house, an accommodation which was granted (things must have greatly altered by this time!) "in the most friendly manner." "So, ere this reaches you," says Knibb, writing to Mr. Dyer on the 30th of November, 1835, "the notorious Knibb will (if Providence spares his life) preach in the very house in which he was held prisoner, in the very room in which the solemn declaration was signed that I never should preach any more, in the very room in which Lord Mulgrave first told the slaves they were to be free. All the magistrates who granted the room, with the exception of one, were staunch members of the Colonial Union! It is a large, magnificent room, and I fully expect that, when I stand on the spot to which I was so rudely hurried away as a prisoner, and they sing, 'Jesus shall reign where'er the sun,' my feelings will be overcome."

The chapel was opened early in the month of April, 1837. Now again was a great gathering at this interesting spot. The services began at six o'clock in the morning. At nine came the children belonging to the congregation, to the number of two thousand; but, not being able to effect their entrance into the chapel, they were addressed on the outside. To relieve the difficulty created by the presence of so vast a multitude, a large school-room, recently erected, was thrown open; this being found inadequate, the court-house was applied for, and again kindly granted; and, after all, several hundred persons were obliged to content themselves with meeting "at old father Brown's, who had rigged a tent for the occasion." All the attendants together are computed to have amounted to six thousand persons, and the white people of Falmouth are reported to have been not a little astonished at the good behaviour of so large a body. The various services engaged the aid of all the ministering brethren present, and the collections amounted to about £600 sterling.

It will easily be believed that this was, both to Knibb and his people, a season of boundless and thrilling joy; and I know no reason why we should be sceptical, when we find him saying, "I believe some, yea, many of them, gave nearly, if not quite, all they had, as an offering of gratitude to God." He quotes the following stanzas as having been sung on the occasion; and as they appear, from their close adaptation, to have been written for the purpose (perhaps by himself), I insert them.

"But, lo! the day, the happy day
Is come, and now we haste away,
Our Saviour God to meet:
Here to his temple, lo! we come,
With singing we regain our home,
And worship at his feet.

"Again we meet, a happy band,
On Zion's mount again we stand,
Again the temple raise:
Once more the ruined walls we build;
And now again is Zion filled
With rapture and with praise."

It is delightful to add, that an eminent spirit of devotion characterized the whole proceedings. "The church," says Knibb, "had agreed to spend a few minutes each day in prayer for fourteen days, that it might be a refreshing season and a time of conversion, and I fully expect that God will answer those prayers." The growing good-will of the whites was manifested by the spontaneous offer of a very influential gentleman in the parish, "to quarry on his own estate, and put up at his own expense, the six stone pillars required for the fence in front of the chapel."

These are the bright aspects of the scene: now come the shadows. In a pecuniary view Knibb had always contemplated this as "a tremendous effort," and he found it in the end even more so than he had anticipated. On the 21st of April, 1837, just after the opening, he began to feel the pressure. He writes thus to Mr. Dyer:—"A part of the money I have borrowed on interest is from persons who will soon need it, and the sum necessary to complete the chapel must be advanced weekly, while the necessities of the schools and country stations make already a pressure upon me. But I dare not despond, or repine, or relax. The Lord has so abundantly assisted me, and granted me so much health and real happiness in the work, that I am filled with joy and thankfulness."

On the 4th of June, however, he makes to the same party the calamitous announcement that the contractors for the erection of the chapel had failed, that "the horrors of a law-suit" were consequently impending, and that, as the only method of avoiding these, he had been obliged to pay to one £100, and to another £500, more than the contract required. These unlooked-for expenses drove him—not, indeed, to despair, but—to the committee. The debt on the chapel was, however, finally and happily liquidated on the first anniversary of the opening. Of this effort Knibb says—"The cheerfulness with which they paid off the debt on the chapel was delightful. 'We *will* have it off,' they said. 'Let us know if what we bring is enough; if not, we will try again.' Full 6,000 persons came down, including children. The chapel was crammed, and the court-house was filled, together with the school-room. Joy lighted up every eye, and 2,100 dollars (£420) were cast into the treasury of the Lord. *They gave their all.* I believe many who gave had not a fourpence left, after their noble effort. I wish you could have seen them when I said the debt was cleared off. Each eye seemed to say, as it gazed upon the building, 'tis all our own."

It is now time to say something of the state of the church and congregation for whom this commodious chapel was provided.

Knibb resumed his labours in November, 1834. He thus writes to Mr. Dyer, on the 20th of January, 1835:—

TO MR. DYER.

"I must say something about my station; and I have prayed that I may not give the least false impression. Well: I am delighted with the prospects around us. It is the Lord's doing.

"During the Christmas week I baptized one hundred and thirty-four persons,* selected from more than a thousand who are inquiring the way to Zion. Some of them brother Dexter examined, others myself; and really I was astonished, and delighted. Nearly the whole had been from five to seven years attendants at the house of God, and their lives, as far as we could ascertain, had been consistent. More than half of them dated their first serious impressions to 'poor Massa Mann.' The love which they cherish for him, charms me. Dear fellow! the fruit of his hard toil now appears.

'Though seed lie buried long in dust,
It shan't deceive our hope;
The precious grain can ne'er be lost,
For grace ensures the crop.'

"On the morning of the baptism my invaluable tent was erected over the baptistery; underneath it, neatly dressed in white, sat the candidates, and around them the many spectators. The service was interesting and solemn.

---

* The ordinance was administered in the old baptistery, which was carefully cleaned from the rubbish with which it had been choked up since the demolition of the chapel, and filled with water for the occasion. I may here add, that two or three of the pillars of the old chapel being found among the ruins, the wood was made into frames and rulers, and distributed as *souvenirs* among friends in England.

"On the sabbath we had nearly, if not quite, two thousand present. Brother Vine (independent) preached in the morning. In the afternoon, I received the baptized into the church by giving them the right hand of fellowship, after which we celebrated together the Lord's supper. It was just three years before that I was taken from them by the military. True, the chapel was not there, but the church was safe, and the Lord had added to it such as should be saved. Our independent brethren and sisters partook with us. I was quite overcome, and while we remembered the past we wept together.

"With respect to the church, it is in a happy and prosperous state. Our prayer-meetings are well attended, and the supplications of those who pray for purity of heart are a token for good. One good man prayed last sabbath morning thus—'Lord, we do not come to de because we have not sin, but dat thou should take it out. Oh! we heart full of sin.' I pray to God that I may not be deceived. I speak as faithfully as I can; and when I see the fixed eye, when I know the long distances they walk, see their increased attendance now they have more time to call their own, and hear their simple confessions of faith in Jesus, I believe they are a people whom the Lord delighteth to bless."

The following extract is from a letter to Mr. E. Carey, written on the 20th of February.

TO MR. EUSTACE CAREY.

"My church is, I hope, in a prosperous state. Most of the backsliders have returned with weeping and supplication, while inquirers are pressing forward to the kingdom of God. Since my return rather more than two hundred have been baptized. Their experiences have delighted me. I do believe that the Lord has been with them of a truth. Full a thousand are now waiting for examination. I shall proceed slowly and prayerfully with them, and I hope I shall receive assistance from above. I speak to all as plainly as I can, and I feel that if they are deceived, I am clear of their blood."

The additions to the church at this period, and for some years subsequently, were frequent and large.

The state of the church at Falmouth, and Knibb's character as a pastor, derive material illustration from a controversy of which the elements were now in preparation, and which ultimately attracted a considerable degree of public attention. I refer to the well known discussion respecting the purity of the baptist churches in Jamaica. Of this controversy it is, happily, not my province to write the history, and I should gladly have avoided all reference to it, had such a course been consistent with my duty as Knibb's biographer; but the portion of his correspondence which refers to it is too large, and the development of his character to which it gave rise is too important, to allow me to overlook it. I shall, however, pursue the least exciting course possible. Without expressing any opinions of my own, I shall endeavour, in the fewest words and in the simplest manner, to exhibit merely the steps he took, and the sentiments he entertained.

The first statements to the disadvantage of the baptist churches in Jamaica were made by Mr. Blyth, an agent of the Scottish Missionary Society in that island, on his return to Great Britain in 1831. Mr. Dyer having communicated the substance of these to several of the missionary brethren, Knibb addressed to him the following reply, dated the 7th of November in that year.

TO MR. DYER.

"Your kind favour of the 8th of September I acknowledge with many thanks; and when I am exactly informed of the charges brought against us by the worthy Mr. Blyth, as far as they relate to myself I shall feel happy to furnish you with a true statement of what is doing among us.

"I assure you he has done himself an injury in the eyes of the poor slaves which years of labour will not retrieve. The honest feeling of indignation they have manifested has delighted me; and

I heartily wish he had been present to hear them state their views, when with gratitude they acknowledged the kindness of the Baptist Missionary Society, in sending them those who would lead them in the way of truth. It will afford me pleasure to hear from you on this subject; as I am convinced inquiry will show the purity of our church discipline, and the rectitude of our conduct as your missionaries.

"Respecting the value the negroes place upon the tickets, I have asked Mandingo, Guinea, Eboe, and creole slaves; I have also sent the most intelligent of the members to inquire on the remote estates, and I have not yet discovered one instance where any superstitious regard is paid to them. Indeed the slaves consider themselves insulted when you ask them the question. They have plainly told me so, and said that they ought not to be called to account whenever Mr. B. chooses to 'tell false upon them.' When Mr. B. returns, he may expect to be treated as was one of his brethren by a whole estate. 'There goes de lying parson, who tell massa for we minister we tief, we hog, and we pig.'

"Amidst all this reproach the cause of Jesus is triumphing; and, whatever charges may be brought against your missionaries, to the last day they may safely appeal. Their witness is in heaven, and their record is on high. The negroes love you ardently for your kindness in sending them the gospel; their prayers ascend for your welfare, and they wish you could behold them walking in the fear of God, and in the comforts of the Holy Ghost. The religion they have supports them when enduring the oft-repeated taunt, or when groaning under the blood-drawing instrument of torture; it cheers them in the hour of death, and enables them to look to heaven as their eternal rest. I speak the feelings of my experience and my heart when I say, that I do not believe there is a race of Christians on earth who rely more entirely on the atonement for salvation, or who, considering their circumstances, more truly adorn the profession they make. To them it is given also to suffer for Jesus' sake. I have beheld them when suffering under the murderous cart-whip; I have beheld them when their backs have been a mass of blood; I have beheld them when loaded with a chain in the streets, a spectacle to devils, to angels, and to men; and never have I heard one murmur, or one reproach against their guilty persecutors.

"Is Mr. Blyth going to tell me that these people display all this Christian heroism through the influence of *a piece of paper* which they have obtained, or by stealing *quantum sufficit* of their master's possessions? Hapless negro, when the very men sent out to instruct him, take part with his persecutors, and attribute all his piety to robbery and witchcraft! The man who can thus injure the distressed I despise; nor would I waste a moment in answering such falsehoods, did I not know that I was the servant of the society. But they have already done good. The slaves are flocking in thousands to hear the gospel. Last sabbath the chapel was literally crammed to excess. Many were outside. Had I a place capable of holding eighteen hundred, it would be quite filled. We doubtless have errors; but, when we discover them, we are as prompt to remove them as others are to aggravate and to publish them."

I am gratified in being able to connect with this letter the following passage from another, which was written to Mr. Dyer on the 30th of November, 1835. It is highly characteristic of the generous nature of the writer. "It will afford you pleasure," says Knibb, "to learn that I have had an interview with Mr. Blyth, that we have agreed to forgive and forget all past differences, and to act as brethren in future. We knelt at the throne of mercy, and prayed each of us with and for each other. I go this week to assist in his church in the formation of a Branch Bible Society. May the Lord bless the union to the advancement of his glory!"

Injurious observations were subsequently made in the year 1836, by Mr. Vine, an agent of the London Missionary Society, in letters sent by that gentleman to England, and put into circulation through private channels. On being informed of these by Mr. Dyer, Knibb expresses both his regret and surprise that such statements should have been sent home by one who had been on such brotherly terms with him, and who could know so little of his flock. "But," he adds, "I have no fear of the result." He met the charges made, accordingly, in a direct and bold manner.

Having first had an interview with Mr. Vine in relation to them, he prepared a statement which was laid before the church, by them adopted as their own, and then sent to the committee. It is as follows:—

"*Falmouth, Feb.* 17, 1836.

"Immediately on the receipt of yours I copied the extract referring to Mr. Vine, and sent it by express to Arcadia, together with a note expressive of my regret at the circumstances to which it referred. To it I received a kind reply, and subsequently I held an interview with Mr. Vine, whom I highly esteem, when he left the impression upon my mind that nothing was further from his intention than to cast a slur upon the whole of our churches; that his remarks were intended to be confined to Arcadia; and that, not knowing the members of our churches, he could not thus have designated the whole.

"That we are sometimes deceived there is no doubt, and that sometimes the people deceive themselves is equally true; but I can neither think with Mr. Vine, nor suppose that he has had sufficient experience to form a judgment. I do trust that there will not be any occasion for an appeal to public opinion, on account of the love I bear to brother Vine; but should there be so, I shall not shrink from the task, sincerely trusting that the purity of our churches will be increased, and the glory of God advanced by the disclosure.

"I shall proceed to give you a statement of the church and the plans we pursue. I will endeavour to write as in the presence of God; and if the committee can suggest any improvement, I shall be thankful to receive it. It is now nearly twelve years since I first landed in Jamaica. I feel that I may soon have to give an account of my stewardship, and any assistance afforded so that that account may be rendered with joy and not with grief, will indeed be a blessing.

"I. *The public means of grace.*—You are aware, my dear sir, that in the time of slavery, we could only have one *service* every other sabbath at the same place with advantage. Since the abolition of slavery, with only two or three exceptions, I have had service every Lord's day at Falmouth, and the attendance has been better each sabbath than it was every other sabbath in the time of slavery. This has been the case, notwithstanding not half can get within the place of worship at present occupied, and the many hindrances yet presented. My congregation is scattered full twelve miles round Falmouth, situated on quite eighty different estates, and many are house-servants, who are often prevented attending: yet I think that my average congregation is at least 1,500 on sabbath mornings. Since my return I have commenced a set of expository discourses on the Epistles on sabbath mornings, beginning with the Corinthians. It has been profitable to myself, and I hope to the people of my charge. I can appeal to my Heavenly Father that I have faithfully and plainly told them the truth, frequently assuring them that a profession of religion, baptism and the Lord's supper, or attending on the means of grace, or any other duty they performed, could not save them; that nothing less than an interest in the blood of Christ would avail, and that if they possessed that, it would evidence itself by a holy life. Still they come regularly. To what are we to attribute it, if not to a desire to know the will of God? Many of them have been offered wages to work on the sabbath, or so late on the Saturday as not to be able to attend their duties on that day, and they have uniformly refused to break the day of rest. Our prayer-meetings are well attended, and truly I often find it good to be there. We have a weekly prayer-meeting for the spread of the gospel on Monday evenings. Last Monday evening we had full five hundred present, of whom eighty had walked two, three, or four miles, after labouring in the fields all day, having to return the same evening, and to be at their work by daylight in the morning.

"II. *Learning.*—I believe I informed you when in England, that I did not think fifty of the slaves connected with the congregation could read. I rejoice to say that now, including children, we have at least six hundred. This has been much brought about by the conduct of some of my members, who without fee or reward devote two or three evenings in the week on many estates to teach the children and adults to read. One thousand primers have been sold, and they are still selling. I do not mean that these attempts are all that is wanted, but they show the disposition; and where there are so few public schools, I hope they will receive the blessing of Him who will see that we have done what we could. When we announced the formation of the Bible Society, in one day we had three hundred subscribers, one hundred of them for family bibles; and at our first quarterly-meeting £27 was brought in as subscriptions. I do not mean to say that this feeling is universal, but among Christians it is very general. I fear that our large churches lead to the impression that *all* the apprentices are thus inclined, and thus under instruction. Far, very far from it. There are from eighteen to twenty thousand in this parish alone, yet far from God, who attend no place of worship regularly. It is the paucity of the ambassadors of the cross that makes the success appear great, and leads to the fear that it cannot be genuine.

" III. *Church-discipline.*—I think that while at home I gave you some account of our church-discipline. However, I will refer to an interesting subject, and commence with the *reception of members.* This is a subject on which I feel deeply, and earnest have been my prayers to be divinely directed. It is necessary here to state, that during my absence, (that is for three years,) in consequence of the trials the church had to endure, of the number who had to be re-examined, and of the laborious duties of my esteemed brother Dendy, no additions were made by baptism to the church. Hence, when I came back, multitudes were waiting, many of whom have since been received. My plan is this:—Either myself, Mrs. Knibb, or some one whom we know to be fully competent, speaks individually to the candidates, Mrs. K. generally taking the females. To each man I speak myself, and hear their views of divine truth. When Mrs. K. has spoken to the females, on receiving her report I talk with them, either individually or collectively. I do not think that I ever fail speaking to each in some such manner as this:—'Now you have assured me that you love Jesus Christ; that you feel it in your heart; that you pray to him every day; that you love so to do; and that you are not living in any known sin?—You believe that baptism will not save you, nor the Lord's supper—yea, nothing but the blood of Christ; and that if you turn again to the world, or live in sin, you will be damned? It is upon such a profession I receive you. If you are living in sin—if you do deceive me—I tell you affectionately, but plainly, you will be sent to hell. But mind, I am clear of your blood. You voluntarily profess to love Christ; no one forces you: if you do love him, he will bless you; if not, I beseech you not to put on his name.' I keep an account of each; and when I have heard those who come, I call a church-meeting, at which the approved candidates are present. I then call over their names, to which they answer, and I state from whence they come. Then I speak to the church, telling them that if they know anything against any one and conceal it, on them must rest the guilt, requesting every member to come and tell me, and giving a week for this purpose. If no charge appears against any of them I receive them for baptism. They are then, in the presence of the church, received by the right hand of fellowship, and become full members of it.

"Since January 1st, 1835, I have baptized, after having been thus examined, 385 persons; and on referring to the receiving book, containing 305 of their names, I find that they have attended as inquirers as follows: —

6 for 9 years,
10 for 8 years,
80 for 7 years,
50 for 6 years,
47 for 5 years,
33 for 4 years,
76 for 3 and 2 years.

"If you can give me any hints by which I can improve this plan, do, and I will thank you.

"*State of the church from December* 1st, 1834, *to January* 1st, 1836.

Baptized	434	Dismissed to other churches	66	Clear increase	366
Restored	31	Dead	22	Old members	843
Received by letter	1	Excluded	12	Total number of members	1209
	466		100		

List of marriages from same date to Jan. 1836:—421 couples, or 842 persons.

"Total number of members since the year when the church was formed, exclusive of those dismissed to form the churches at Rio Bueno and Stewart Town, 1478. Of the present number, 1209, about 100 are old and infirm.

"IV. *Liberality.*—I am aware that subscribing to the cause of Jesus is not always a mark of real attachment to it; but still it is a pleasure to be able to state, that, as far as their ability enables them, they are quite willing to give of their little to its promotion. I know some will say that this is extorted by fear; but I know also that such a statement is false. What is subscribed is generally given to me by the parties themselves, and I tell them plainly that, if it be not willingly bestowed, God will not accept it. I have collected money both in England and Jamaica, and I assure you I much prefer the latter. No excitement of popular speakers, nor parade of public meetings is necessary, they give what they can afford without noise or show. Once in the year several of our deacons and other active members officially visit every property where we have members. I might refer to some individual cases to show the feeling of the members of my church. I select one. When the painful news of the sufferings of our Madagascar brethren reached us, I informed the people of it, and held a special prayer-meeting for them. Brother Vine was present, and gave an interesting address. It was a very wet day, but the place was crowded, many walked some miles to attend, and the sympathy manifested was very pleasing.

"I acknowledge that we have faults among us, and that sometimes our pleasing hopes are blasted, and the affection I feel for my poor people makes me deeply feel these things. There are yet much ignorance and many failings among them; but, with all their failings, they are a kind and affectionate people. Their sorrows have been deep; their advantages have been very few; a debasing system has, for their whole lives, degraded their minds; but they are willing to be taught, and where there is sympathy with them, they love those who instruct them. Never, my dear sir, during my connexion with the church, have we had one quarrel, or one jarring church-meeting. And I always consult them. It is not the peace of sleep, but of active love. My heart is knit to theirs; I mourn all their follies, and I rejoice in their growth. I know I am enthusiastic, perhaps I need it should be so; but, identified with them, what concerns them concerns me.

"All I can say is, that if I knew a single thing that would purify the church, I would not withhold it. We are, dear sir, a happy, a united church. We do walk together in love. I assure you, that notwithstanding all the little things that sometimes annoy, I bless God that I am here; and I pray that I may live and die among them, when, having finished my course as a poor ransomed sinner looking for the mercy of my God, I hope with them I shall be received into the mansions of the blessed. That God may work in our churches all the good pleasure of his will is my fervent prayer."

Among the rumours which were rife at this period, were some which imputed to the missionaries' luxury in their style of living, and extravagance in their expenditure of public money. Knibb's notice of these charges occurs in a letter to Dr. Hoby, dated February 7th, 1837.

TO DR. HOBY.

"There is properly such a delicacy in domestic arrangements, and they are altogether so uninteresting a subject, that I scarcely like to take up any person's time in referring to it; but, as you request it, I will do it. You are aware that there is not a public conveyance in the island, and that, in carrying the gospel into the interior, and in visiting schools, there is much travelling. Hence every missionary keeps a horse or horses, according as his wants may require, and a gig in which to ride. This is what almost every shopkeeper does. No Englishman can walk any considerable distance here; and twelve years' experience convinces me, that more missionaries have been sacrificed by being ill-provided with the means of travelling than from any other cause. I am quite willing to risk my life in the cause of duty, but not in flogging a poor jaded horse, who is worked to death, to save a few pounds. I speak thus freely, because I have purchased my own horses myself, and paid for them myself; and because there are some good men in England who would rather that a missionary should die now and then, than that it should be said that he had a horse and gig in which to ride. Well, let them come and try it. I love my dear people, and my wife and children, far too well to pursue conduct condemned by every medical practitioner in the colony, and tempting to that merciful Providence by which I am still sustained.

"With respect to house comforts, with gratitude I own that I have every mercy I need. Neither riches nor poverty marks the dwellings or the diet of your missionaries. Some, having property of their own, use it as they think proper, and they have a right to do so, having regard to the will of God. The only trial I feel in being a missionary is this, that I cannot educate my children. My salary is such that I must either give up part of my missionary work, or leave them with a very partial education; but while the fields are so white to the harvest I cannot refrain from exertion. I deeply mourn that I can do no more; and if I can but at last, as a poor redeemed sinner, find mercy, I shall be a miracle of grace. O! 'tis a noble work, a delightful employ; and hourly do I bless God that he has so wonderfully honoured me in permitting me to engage in it. That I am actuated by a love of gain (and I believe this equally applies to my beloved brethren) my Heavenly Father knows is false. So mean a motive could not sustain the conflict, nor would it receive the manifest blessing of Him who has classed covetousness among the most hateful of crimes."

During the winter of 1836-7, Messrs. Sturge and Harvey visited the West Indies, with a view to ascertain by their own observation the working of the apprenticeship. An idea was thrown out in the committee that these gentlemen might be requested to examine the state of the baptist churches in Jamaica, and to give a kind of official report on their condition, with a view to the satisfaction of the public mind. Upon being informed of this proposal by his friend, Dr. Hoby, Knibb thus noticed it: —

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, February* 7, 1837.

"Respecting the deputation, and the expectations thereof. They are now in Jamaica, and I am looking forward with pleasure to welcome them as friends, but not as possessing the least right to examine into my church affairs. If the ordeal through which we have passed has not settled the question of our veracity, nothing will; and why

'Should men unskilled in arts,
In different countries born, in different parts,
Conspire to cheat you with a lie?'

"No, my dear brother; you have in Jamaica as honourable and as devoted a set of men as ever graced any missionary association. My conduct to the deputation shall be frank and open as a friend; but, after they have obtained what information they seek, I intend asking them their opinion, informing them that the most manly part will be to give it here, that mistakes may be corrected, and that, if necessary, the reply to any remarks they may intend to favour the public in England with may appear at the same time as the charge."

Upon consideration the committee thought it better not to annex to those benevolent travellers any official character, but to leave the churches open to their independent judgment. No one can doubt the wisdom of this decision. The opinion of Messrs. Sturge and Harvey has been given to the world in the published account of their travels, and has been aptly quoted by Dr. Cox, in his History of the Baptist Mission.

The intercourse of Mr. Sturge with Knibb was free and confidential. It led to the commencement of an interesting and important correspondence, and I may add, to the formation of a friendship, which was interrupted only by death.

I now quit this subject for the present, and advert to one topic more, illustrative of the state of the church at Falmouth. In 1837 a circular was issued by the committee to the churches in Jamaica, containing some remarks on the importance of training native agents for the missionary work, and indicating a somewhat eager desire on the part of some supporters of the mission in England, that greater attention should be paid to this subject. Knibb's reply does not indicate so high an estimate of such exertions as he afterwards formed; but I give it as it is, in order both to show the man, and to exhibit the progress of his views. He wrote as follows :—

TO MR. DYER.

"I really cannot understand the hue and cry made about native agency. We employ more than any hundred baptist churches in England put together. What do the people want? I have thirty deacons, all of whom engage in prayer and other meetings. I have seventy helpers, who conduct prayer-meetings, and exhort their fellow Christians. I have three schoolmasters, one of whom preaches every sabbath, while the other two conduct the public worship of God every Lord's day, combining it with teaching the young and reading a sermon, or sometimes making a few remarks. I have also about twenty active sabbath-school teachers, who are doing all they can. Two young men have been sent from the church who are now fully occupied in teaching, and two others are now training. Thus three sabbath-schools, three day-schools, and three evening schools are in constant operation; while three chapels, in a dense population of full sixteen thousand persons, are constantly open. The only way in which it is possible to train these young persons is in schools. They are married, and must be supported, nor has the least habit of thrift ever been theirs. I worked my way through a school; and, if those we have employed act properly, they are quite as efficiently employed as they can be. As to teaching them, I have no time, if I had the talents. Constant preaching, the supply of the stations and schools, the redressing the injuries of the poor people, and the general interests of the mission, engross all my time. That men will arise here I have no doubt, and I shall hail the day; but education must precede it."

Simultaneously with the erection of the new chapel at Falmouth, itself a large undertaking, Knibb was setting in motion and carrying on several similar enterprizes. So early as the 24th of November, 1834, only a month after his arrival, he thus writes to Mr. Dyer concerning a new station:—"When in England I frequently mentioned to you the Refuge as a desirable second station for Falmouth. I am now happy to say that the purchase of land is completed, and the title enrolled. I am exceedingly desirous of immediately putting up a strong wood chapel, and a small house, so that we may have a retreat from the unhealthy marsh in Falmouth. It is the most desirable place that could be obtained; elevated and healthy, about nine miles from Falmouth, in the centre of a population of at least nine thousand, not slaves, but free labourers."

On the 1st of January, 1835, he writes to the same party as follows:—"On every estate in the neighbourhood of the Refuge, there are members of my church. A large school might be established, and much good done. I could rent a place near it, but to this I have a decided objection. The rent is so enormous that, in a few years, quite the sum I ask for will have been drained from the society, and after that we must build, and incur expense besides in repairing the injuries the house may have sustained."

In a letter of a subsequent date he announces the formation of another new station in the following terms:—"Since I last wrote to you I have been blessed in opening a new station at a place called Piedmont, ten miles from Falmouth. I have purchased the land, cleared the ground, and laid the corner-stone of a chapel 38 by 58. I call it Waldensia. It is a lovely spot, and I love the name. The poor people, to the number of nearly one hundred, put up a large shed in a day, and at present full seven hundred persons attend where the blessed news of salvation is proclaimed. There is not a single public school in the neighbourhood. I am now nearly £3000 in debt, nor do I expect any assistance.—Well, I cannot help it, nor let sinners perish without trying to save them. I feel confident that God will assist me; and to him, to him alone, be all the glory."

On the 13th of March, 1838, he writes to Mr. Dyer in a similar strain:—"I enclose," says he, "a plan of a plot of land which is to be conveyed to the society on Silver Grove, where Camberwell school is now held. It is a most important station, and as the proprietor has, through his attorney, George Gordon, Esq., promised to give it, I have earnestly to request that you will have a title prepared as soon as possible, conveying it in trust to the society, and let it be presented for signature in the most acceptable manner, as speedily as possible. We have in the neighbourhood full one thousand persons connected with us; there are one hundred and forty in the day, and two hundred and fifty in the sabbath-school, and this is the only spot of land that can be procured."

And on the 8th of May in the same year, he says, "The enlargement at Wilberforce is nearly completed, and I shall re-open it next Lord's day. It will not cost me more than £300, and I hope, somehow or other, to meet the demand. I have a willing people, a happy church, and a good hope through grace, and what need I more ?"

These multiplied efforts, however, although both admirable in motive and successful in result, speedily involved him in pecuniary embarrassments. A proposition which he made to the committee, offering to become no longer chargeable on the society on condition of their advancing him the sum of £750, having been declined, he thus wrote to Mr. Dyer in explanation of his remaining on the funds another year:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, Sept.* 6, 1837.

"You are fully aware that my pecuniary difficulties arise, not from debts on the chapel in Falmouth, but from my efforts in benighted parts of the parish. Had I left the poor people there destitute, my chapel had been fully paid for. It is now able to grapple with its debt, and to support me also; but the public ought to know that the church has to support another minister besides me, and three schoolmasters, besides defraying the debt on the purchase of a house in Falmouth, and on two chapels, in addition to houses and schools in very destitute parts of the country. It is for these that I plead. Money I must find monthly to support these persons; the local expenses of the three stations, which are considerable, must also be met monthly, while those persons of whom I have been obliged to borrow money are requesting me very soon to repay it. To escape the horrors of a lawsuit I have sacrificed full £600, of which £250 is due this month, and where to get it I know not, for I have spent all my year's salary, and have borrowed all I like to borrow. I now owe more than £2,500, five hundred of which I must pay off in nine months. The current expenses of the three stations, schoolmasters' salaries included, are full £900 per annum. What, then, can I do ?"

In subordination to the public worship of God, but in close connexion with it, there was another subject which Knibb regarded with the deepest anxiety. It was education. On general grounds he had formed the highest estimate of its value, and he thought it of pre-eminent importance under the existing circumstances of Jamaica. He was intensely desirous that efforts should be promptly and adequately made to render knowledge co-extensive with freedom, and he almost fretted at any indication of delay.

On the 24th of November, 1834, almost immediately after his arrival, he says to Mr. Dyer:—"I hope by the time this reaches you, the friends will have done something definite for the schools. The lamentable ignorance of the poor children all around is equalled only by their thirst for instruction. The intense desire manifested to learn to read, by old and young, far, very far, surpasses my most sanguine expectations. What to do I know not. There is a young man here, a member of the church, who I think would do for a master, under my guidance, and this I should most cheerfully give; but I fear that it must be a year at least ere we can commence for want of a room."

Writing again on the 22nd of July, 1835, he exclaims:—"Are we to have anything for schools from government? Two thousand five hundred apprentices in this parish, and not one public school yet! This is deplorable." With his characteristic energy, he adds, "I have bought a piece of ground in Falmouth for a school, and shall put on it a school-room 45 feet by 35, after Christmas, if I can."

The foundation of the edifice thus referred to was laid on the 26th of September in the same year. On this occasion also there was a large assemblage of persons. The stone was laid by two magistrates, John Kelly, and J. R. Vermont, Esqs. A procession to the spot was arranged, in which were 1,200 children, whose parents were all members of the church, and about a hundred mothers, with their free-born infants in their arms. "When I saw them," says Knibb, "my heart leaped for joy"—a joy, however, saddened by the reflection that "as yet there was no school for them." "We made a thousand cakes," he adds, "that each might have one, and sadly was I disappointed that I had not enough. Well," he goes on to say, "my Heavenly Father knows that I would instruct them if I could. May He, in infinite mercy, provide that knowledge they are anxious to obtain!"

His general views in relation to educational efforts are given in the following letter to Mr. Dyer, in answer to inquiries from home on the subject:—

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, Nov.* 10*th*, 1835.

"The parish of Trelawney contains the greatest number of apprentices of any in the island, the children under six years of age alone numbering 8,000 on the first of August, 1834, and the entire population of apprentices being about 27,000. Its destitution is such that I am not aware of one public school in the whole parish, except one or two small ones recently established.

"The town of Falmouth contains nearly 5,000 inhabitants, and near it are situated the small villages of Martha Brae, Salt Marsh, and the Rock. Within three or four miles are a number of sugar estates and pasturage pens. It is in this town of Falmouth that I have purchased a piece of ground, in a central part, and have commenced the erection of a school-room.

"If those means which are necessary for its completion are granted, it is my intention to have a truly competent teacher; and having been engaged in instruction on the Lancasterian system for several years, I shall take the superintendence myself. The school-room will have a sliding partition to divide the boys from the girls, who will enter by different doors, and have different play-grounds; it will seat, on the system of Lancaster, about two hundred and twenty, and will be open for children of all classes, without any reference to the religious sentiments of their parents. The arrangements of this school will be entirely on the liberal system, no catechism of any kind being admitted, and the selections from the scriptures sent out by the Lancasterian institution forming the school-books used. Respecting the investment of the property, I am perfectly willing to place it in trust according to the rules of the Lancasterian School Society, and shall feel happy to receive from them the draft of a deed, that the property may be secured for the purposes intended for ever. Towards the erection of this school-room I collected while in England the sum of £300 sterling, with which I have purchased the land, and commenced the building, in the hope that I shall be assisted by a government distinguished by its solicitude to promote the welfare of the rising population of Jamaica.

"The apprentices connected with my church and congregation in the town, most of whom come from the country round, amount to full three thousand, and at the laying of the corner-stone twelve hundred children of apprentices were present. Nine miles from Falmouth, we have a branch station called Wilberforce, situate in a most healthy spot, within a reasonable distance of several large estates, and most eligibly situated for a school. Here full two hundred children of apprentices might easily be collected, and there is ground enough to combine a school of industry with that of education. It will afford me much pleasure to present the land (which is my own) for the purpose of building a school-room, and if the government will place at my disposal £150 sterling, I will engage to raise a like sum, and will erect a school-room, vesting the land as agreed on. For two months I have had a young man training in the Lancasterian school at Montego Bay, for this important station. Eleven miles in another direction I have established a day-school, which contains about thirty-five scholars, and about one hundred and seventy on the sabbath. It is yet in its infancy, but I have no doubt, when my engagements will allow me to give it the attention it needs, it will prove efficient for the purposes designed.

"Thus, my dear friend, have I laid before you a plain statement of my proceedings. I know not exactly the intentions of government; but for the sake of the thousands of destitute youth in the parish, I do sincerely hope that no further delay will take place in affording that instruction without which they must become its curse, but with which they may become its blessing. I have submitted this letter to his honour the custos, Mr. Frater, who has requested me to say, that he entirely approves of it and its object, and that both he and the magistrates will render me every assistance in their power. Several of the magistrates have given their unqualified approval."

In March, 1836, the new school-room at Falmouth was opened, and brought into successful action. In honour of Lord Suffield, a large proprietor who had promoted beneficial measures, it was called Suffield school.

The extended scale on which the plan of erecting school-rooms was now adopted by this ardent missionary, may appear from the following extract of a letter to Mr. Dyer, dated February 23rd in this year:—

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, Feb.* 23, 1836.

"Mr. Vine informed me the other day that the government offer was two-thirds of the expense: if so I should be happy to obtain it, as we much need a school-room at Wilberforce station. For three months I have had a very pious and intelligent young man, a member of the church, learning the system of Lancaster at brother Burchell's school at Montego Bay. He has now commenced; he has already forty-six children in that country spot, and he expected twenty more this week. On sabbath days he has a large sabbath-school, and conducts in my absence public worship, by reading one of Burder's Village Sermons. The expense the church has borne, and will cheerfully bear till we can get help; but we need a school-room, and if you can obtain two-thirds as a friend, though you cannot as secretary, I will cheerfully raise the other part, and commence at once. I have written to the governor respecting the school-room at Falmouth, and hope that I shall succeed in obtaining £300 sterling, to assist in the completion of that building. I have another school called Endeavour, which is kept by one of the deacons of the church; it is yet in its infancy, but it is not void of encouragement. He holds sabbath service, the people having erected a shed; it is eleven miles from Falmouth. The expense of this has hitherto fallen entirely upon the church."

Government grants were in the end obtained, both for Suffield school and Wilberforce. He says in another letter, dated March 20, 1837, "I have commenced a school at Piedmont (Waldensia). I have erected a school-house and dwelling-house at an expense of £600 (nearly £400 sterling), the whole expense of which I have to meet; but its very destitute state prevented me from giving up the school, as I hoped that God would incline the hearts of some to help me."

The reader has probably been struck by the fact that aid from the government towards the erection of school-rooms was both solicited and received, and he may desire some explanation on this matter. I will state the case in a few words. On the abolition of slavery, his majesty's ministers manifested a great and most laudable anxiety to promote general education. The best means of effecting this object were not easily determined on; the government, however, thought it good to offer their aid to the several missionary societies which had agents in the West Indies, and, among these, to the Baptist Missionary Society. To their honour it must be said, that the proposals submitted indicated a very correct appreciation of the difficulties in the way of the acceptance of such aid, and that they were framed in a manner which exhibited a sincere desire to obviate them. The substance was, that grants should be made towards the erection of school-houses, upon the condition of at least one-third being raised by voluntary contribution, and upon further condition that the government might from time to time be informed, on inquiry, whether a school was still conducted there. The committee found much in this proposition to engage their grateful consideration; but they ultimately determined to decline the offer, without wishing to govern by their vote the conduct of their missionaries as private individuals. The result was that some of the missionaries, and among them Knibb, applied for aid, and received it. This course, however, was not long persevered in, cause being seen on the whole to disapprove of it. A resolution to receive no further aid from government was taken by the north-side churches in March, 1837. In a letter to Mr. Sturge, dated September 12th, in the same year, Knibb thus adverts to the subject, in reply, it appears, to some observations of his correspondent:—"Respecting the government grant, there is a growing disinclination to receive any further aid. I do not intend to apply for, or to receive, any more from them, and I know that many of my brethren will act in the same manner. Nothing but the urgency of the demand for schools would ever have induced me to receive it, combined with the idea that the government were deeply indebted to us, in not having paid the whole sum necessary to rebuild our chapels."

In order to draw more general attention to the subject of education it was thought advisable to hold a public meeting in relation to it; and Knibb availed himself of the anniversary of the opening of the Suffield school-room for this purpose. Accordingly, on the 29th day of September, 1837, "a numerous and respectable audience," (their number was estimated at about twelve hundred,) assembled in the chapel, Edmund B. Lyon, Esq., special justice, in the chair. After the report of the school had been read, and sundry speeches in commendation of education had been delivered, Knibb rose "amidst enthusiastic cheers." His object was to propose a vote of thanks to Messrs. Sturge and Harvey, "for their benevolent visit to the colony, and their laudable exertions, since their return to England, on behalf of the children of the negro population," a proposition which was received with "great cheers;" on this occasion, however, he diverged for a moment to his favourite subject, liberty, in terms too characteristic not to be quoted. "Mr. Chairman," said he, "while I deem it proper to limit the expression of thanks to the efforts which these individuals made, and are still making, in behalf of the children of the apprentices, I do not wish for one moment to conceal the admiration with which I view their conduct in the general mission of mercy on which they came. I am not either ashamed of my principles, or afraid before any man to avow them; nor am I among the number of those who consider the advocacy of civil liberty inconsistent with the ministerial character. No, sir; the benign religion of the Redeemer presents with her right hand immortal happiness, and with her left that civil liberty which cannot be taken from man without insulting his Creator. I distinctly wish it to be known, that I do not flinch from the public avowal of anything I have said or done. I take this opportunity publicly to proclaim myself an enemy to oppression, and to declare that I shall always use my best efforts to uproot tyranny, and to alleviate the sufferings of those placed under my charge. I rejoice, sir, that the reign of tyranny and oppression is waning; and I trust the day is not far off when Africa shall give pastors to the church, and senators to the world, as she has done before."

Speaking of this meeting to Dr. Hoby, in a letter dated the 3rd of October, he says:—"It was a good meeting, and happy should I have been if Mr. Sturge and his friend could have seen the place when I announced a vote for them. Many of their opponents were present, but not one opened his mouth. They have been most abominably reviled, and motives have been attributed to them, and to us, which none but base and lick-the-dust minds ever think of: I was therefore determined, at the first meeting in my chapel, to try the mettle of my own people and of their enemies, and happy am I that not a discordant note was heard. Thus you will perceive that we are progressing a little."

On the first anniversary of the opening of the chapel, another, and a somewhat more adventurous experiment upon the attention of the colonists was made. The children of four schools, the Suffield, the Wilberforce, the Waldensia, and the Camberwell, amounting in all to about fifteen hundred, assembled at Suffield school-room at nine in the morning, and being duly marshalled under "four handsome banners," they paraded the principal streets of the town, singing hymns of praise and school songs, until they arrived at the chapel. This, of course, was filled to overflowing. Mr. Lyon being again voted to the chair, an extended examination of the children was gone through, and an address from the chairman followed. After this Knibb expressed his admiration of the neatness and order of the children. "I do not believe," said he, "that in the whole world, fifteen hundred children could be gathered together, whose parents were peasants, more cleanly and properly dressed, or better behaved." He went on to say, "As my friend Mr. Lyon has referred to the base slanders industriously circulated by a hireling press, I shall repeat what I have before asserted, that I never will degrade myself by replying to any anonymous communication, let it emanate from what quarter it may. I know the animosity of the beings by whom I am assailed, but their efforts to destroy my influence among the people I love shall ever be treated by me with the silent contempt they deserve." He then urged the apprentices present to conduct themselves with propriety. To this advice they audibly responded from the gallery, and they promised to give the best proof of the falsity of the charges so frequently made against them, by their continued good conduct.

Of a similar meeting he speaks in a letter to his sister in the following terms:—"We had a delightful day on the first of August. Fourteen hundred children from our different schools paraded the town, with appropriate banners, from the school-room, where I gave them an address; and after this they had a feast of roast beef and porter, which they appeared to relish quite as much, and more, than the lessons of wisdom inculcated. But it was a glorious day after all. Their shrill voices, as they sang through the streets, thrilled through my heart, while the mothers, looking upon their free children, and aiding their songs with uplifted hands, thanking God that they had lived to see such a day, produced an impression as gratifying as any earthly object can convey.

As illustrative of his ardent promotion of educational efforts within his sphere, I introduce the following extracts from his letters:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"*August* 11, 1837.

"I do hope that the friends of the African will not forget his moral destitution, and I rejoice that you hold out some hope that aid will be afforded to schools. I have now four schoolmasters and four schoolmistresses to support, all on the British system; and were it not for a few kind donations from home, though my church does what it can, I know not what I should do. Full 40,000 persons reside in this parish, and there are not more than six day-schools for apprentices on liberal principles, and very few on any other. I dare not relinquish my efforts, although sometimes I know not how I shall succeed in raising the money."

TO MR. STURGE.

"*August* 15, 1837.

"It will afford you pleasure to learn that the schools are prospering, and that I have an opening for another, where education is scarcely known. I have this last week engaged a fourth schoolmaster, one who was educated in the Lancasterian school at Kingston when under my care. This is one of the first-fruits of that harvest I hope we shall soon reap. I hope we shall soon hear that help will be obtained in this important part of our work, or we shall be obliged to relinquish the schools for want of funds. But I feel persuaded that God will appear for us, and I cannot, I dare not hold back."

TO MR. DYER.

"*September* 6, 1837.

"I do hope that the friends of Jesus will think of the rising race. My soul yearns over them. Their destitution is deplorable. For them I must plead, or they will perish. I have some good hopes of establishing a school near to Dee-side, which I was obliged to relinquish for want of funds. I shall write to some friends to see if I cannot obtain help, by books, or fancy articles, or money, for this object; and in those communications I shall endeavour to arouse them to diligence in this much needed work. O that I could do more, that I could feel more, that I could pray more, for the poor oppressed and ignorant population around! Oh! it is all ignorance 'that can be felt.' May the God of mercy still assist me in my poor efforts to remove it!"

TO MR. STURGE.

"*September* 12, 1837.

"My heart will rejoice to learn that the kind friends of Jesus will assist us in this deeply interesting part of our work. I feel at times that God will not suffer us to want the necessary means to carry on this much needed and much neglected part of the missionary enterprise. You will be pleased to hear that young men are offering themselves, of piety and respectable talents. Since you left I have had five applications, three of which are accepted, and will all be in a course of training in Suffield school ere this reaches you. The raising up of these instruments *now*, I view as one of the brightest appearances of Providence."

On the 2nd of October he takes the following general review of the results of his labours, in a letter to Dr. Hoby:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"Less than three years ago, I returned to this parish. There was not a chapel in connexion with the society commenced, and the scattered congregations were just re-organizing, after the bloody scenes of martial law. Since then I have had actively to superintend the erection of four chapels, three school-rooms, and three mission-houses, at considerable toil, and at an expense of full £13,500; the burden of which has pressed, and still presses heavily, but they are all completed. The church has increased full four hundred members. Mr. ——, and three other coloured persons, have been engaged as catechists and schoolmasters. The latter three have required training for the work. Two other young men have been sent from the church to other churches as schoolmasters, and these are now training in the Suffield school. Mr. —— preaches every Lord's day, and the other schoolmasters conduct public worship in connexion with the sabbath-schools. Thus three stations, in a population of 16,000 persons, are open every Lord's day, and four male and four female teachers are regularly employed; add to this that we have full seventy persons who conduct prayer-meetings on seventy different estates; thirty deacons, who in the several districts superintend, and many of them exhort, and about twenty sabbath-school teachers."

On his return to Jamaica, Knibb assumed an attitude strikingly different from that in which the society had originally placed him, and to which he had previously submitted. He had gone out under a pledge of inactivity and silence on the subject of slavery, and he had conscientiously redeemed his pledge; but in England he had thrown off his bonds, and become the unshackled advocate of freedom. And he stooped to chains no more. He re-appeared in Jamaica as the avowed and uncompromising enemy of oppression in all its forms. We shall find him, consequently, acting a prominent part in the great struggle which took place during the period of the apprenticeship, and affording in these circumstances new and noble developments of his character.

He took the earliest opportunity of announcing his determination. On occasion of laying the foundation-stone of his new chapel, on the 14th of January, 1835, the presence of two or three of the magistrates constituting what he thought a fit opportunity, he made the declaration to his people that he was still the foe of slavery and the friend of the oppressed, and that while they acted right, he would defend them, let the consequences to himself be what they might. He received a "fatherly hint" from Mr. Dyer, which he acknowledged with thanks; but he coolly replied, "My own opinion is, that it is now necessary, on proper occasions, to let the people know what are our views."

The first matter to which his attention was directed was the law passed by the House of Assembly in aid of the Slavery Abolition Act of the British legislature. "The new law," says he, "is very bad. Apprentices are valued at £60, £80, and £90: in fact they cannot now purchase themselves. I hope the law will be disallowed." And on the 17th of March he writes on the subject as follows :—"The law made here, and now in operation, is a most abominable infringement upon the abolition act. That was bad, this is worse. I pray to God that it may be disallowed. Apprentices are now valued higher than when slaves. One named Bailey, from Georgia estate, who was nearly flogged to death during martial law, paid £75 currency for his term of apprenticeship last week. Charles Campbell's son, a boy of eight years of age, was valued at £21 6*s.* 8*d.* I wished to assist my servant George (he is a house servant); for his three years and a half they valued him at £60. The fact is, that, under the abolition act, they were purchasing themselves so fast that this law was made to stop them. This is the third time the law has been altered unfavourably to the apprentice. How can the poor things be expected to understand or to relish such continued changes, and all for the worse?"

He noticed also, at a very early period, the excessive severity indulged in by some of the special justices, to whom pre-eminently the apprentices were to look for fairness and protection. On the 24th of February, 1835, he writes thus:—"Some of the special magistrates flog most cruelly, and I fear will create much discontent. If the Anti-Slavery Society were to send out one or more staunch men, who would be present at the trials of apprentices, and faithfully report them, they would do great good. It would be a check upon the magistrates which they would much feel.

On the 1st of June he uses the following language:—"Through great mercy we are all well, and matters are quiet, which would not be the case were not the negroes the most patient people upon earth. Oh! this thrice-accursed apprenticeship!—nothing but blood, murderous cells, and chains! I think nearly forty young and old females pass my door in chains every morning. Not one school is yet established, while most abominable cells and treadmills are being erected all over the island! This to prepare the poor things for freedom!! You tell me to be quiet, and I am; but if I were at home, I would publish what I know as far as I could travel."

He did not on this matter confine himself to mere lamentation. He communicated some of the facts with which he was acquainted to the governor, and a correspondence ensued which it affords me great pleasure to insert. It is as follows:—

TO THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF SLIGO.

"*June* 30, 1835.

"My Lord Marquis,—I beg most respectfully to solicit your excellency's attention to the accompanying statements.

"Having received positive information that females, as well as men, were frequently flogged while working on the treadmill in this town, by the order and under the inspection of Mr. Sloly the supervisor, I acquainted Mr. Davies, the special magistrate, with the circumstance, who assured me that he had not authorized any such infliction. Being fully assured that such conduct on the part of Mr. Sloly was as illegal as it was inhuman, I applied to John Kelly, Esq., and one or two other magistrates, for information respecting the authority vested in the hands of Mr. Sloly, which issued, I believe, in Mr. Kelly's taking with him one or two other magistrates, and on inquiry, ordering Mr. Sloly to desist. This took place on Saturday morning the 27th instant.

"Fully hoping that no other flogging would take place, I resolved to let the matter rest, and informed Mr. Kelly of my determination, although one of the female members of my church had been most severely flogged while working on the wheel, and while she was labouring under considerable indisposition; but on the same evening the flogging was recommenced with more than usual severity, as detailed in the accompanying affidavit.* I feel, therefore, my lord, that it is a duty I owe to the unfortunate victims of Mr. Sloly's tyranny to lay the case before your excellency, being fully persuaded that a knowledge of the power exercised will be sufficient to induce your excellency to put a stop to a procedure at variance with the abolition act, and repugnant to every feeling of humanity.

"I remain," &c. &c.

---

* Copy of Affidavit. "Charles Atherton being sworn, maketh oath and saith, that he was present during the time the treadmill in this town was working on Saturday evening the 27th day of June, and that he saw the two drivers flog a woman about her head, and across her waist, one being on the top of the mill steps and the other on the ground, and both flogging the woman at the same time. That during this time, Mr. Sloly the supervisor was present, and that when he, Charles Atherton, spoke, Mr. Sloly ordered them away; and that on his refusal to go, Mr. Sloly said that the mill would soon be walled in, and that then he will keep all from coming to see it.

"Sworn before me this 29th day of June,

"Richard Kelly."

REPLY.

"*The King's House, July 4th,* 1835.

"SIR,—I am commanded by his excellency, the governor, to acquaint you, in reply to your letter, communicating the highly illegal conduct of the supervisor of the Falmouth house of correction, in ordering corporeal punishment upon persons sentenced for their offences to walk the treadmill, that when he heard, a considerable time ago, that in one instance in another parish it had been done, he immediately directed me to write a circular to all the custodes or senior magistrates of the several parishes of this island, acquainting them with this desire that such practice should on no account be continued, as being entirely illegal, and his excellency very much regrets that it should have occurred since those his directions. Mr. Davies will by next week's post receive the commission of local magistrate, and he is directed by this post thereupon to take informations against Mr. Sloly, and the evidence to be bound over, that Mr. Sloly may be tried at the Montego Bay assizes for the offence; and he hopes that these proceedings will have the effect of putting a stop to such a violation of the law.

"I am," &c. &c.

TO THE MOST NOBLE THE MARQUIS OF SLIGO.

"*July* 6, 1835.

"MY LORD MARQUIS,—I beg most respectfully to submit to your lordship's consideration a copy of an affidavit * I have this morning forwarded to my attorney, now at Montego Bay, for the purpose of its being handed to the attorney-general. I should not have troubled your excellency with this communication had not the name of one of the special magistrates been mentioned therein.

---

* "*Jane Reid,* an apprentice to Wakefield estate, in the parish of Trelawney and county of Cornwall, being duly sworn, maketh oath, and saith :—That on leaving her work on Monday evening, the 22nd of June, she felt ill, and went into the hot-house on Tuesday morning, and that on the same day, before she had seen any doctor, the overseer, Mr. Paul Paterson, ordered her into the dungeon, where she remained without anything to eat, until about nine o'clock the next morning. And this deponent further saith, that on Thursday morning she was taken before Mr. Price, the special magistrate, who, without asking her any questions, ordered her to be worked in the treadmill in Falmouth, and in the penal gang for four days. And this deponent further saith, that on her way to the treadmill, she met Dr. Elliott, the doctor of the estate, who, after looking at her tongue, said that she was sick, and that if he had been on the estate he would have prevented the punishment, but as it is passed, he cannot help it. And this deponent further saith, that on the same Thursday evening she was tied on the treadmill with both her wrists, with an

"I beg leave to return to your excellency my sincere thanks for the prompt and decisive measures you have adopted in reference to my last communication, and remain," &c. &c.

In sending copies of this correspondence to Mr. Dyer, Knibb speaks thus in justification of his interference: —

TO MR. DYER.

"I know, my dear sir, you wish me to be quiet, but I cannot. Place yourself in my situation, and I think you would act too. I know that I am bringing upon myself much trouble; but I heed it not, and I hope that I shall never live to see the day when I can behold a bleeding, chained, Christian female, and fail to defend her through fear of man. Do not, my dear sir, think that these cases are solitary, or that when walls enclose the dens of infamy called workhouses, they will cease to be. Unless you in England demand justice for the deeply injured, half enslaved apprentice, justice will not be his portion. I have this hour seen a poor woman, from Orange Valley, who, in a state of pregnancy, has been tied on the wheel, and severely flogged. It is very painful for me to be at war with the people here, but while oppression is identified with their names, so it must be. Unless there are some means adopted to protect the few rights the infamous Jamaica Amended Law has left to the apprentice, I know not what will be the result; but

iron collar round her neck, and a chain wrapped round her waist, by one of the drivers at the workhouse, who this deponent believes is named George Pew, by the order of Mr. Sloly. And this deponent further saith, that being very ill, when the wheel turned round she fell off, and hung by her wrists on the wheel, which bruised her leg very much, and made it bleed. And this deponent further saith, that while she was thus hanging on the wheel, she heard Mr. Sloly order George Pew to flog her with a cat, saying he did not care if she fell down dead before him. And this deponent further saith, that the said George Pew did flog her on her back and shoulder till they bled much, when the same George Pew tock wet ashes and rubbed into her back. And this deponent further saith, that on Friday morning she was again put on the wheel, though very ill, and tied and flogged as before mentioned.

"6th July, 1835."

injury to the proprietor must be one. It appears to me that many are determined that the system shall not work. Can you get answers to the following questions? Is it legal to work either men or women in chains in the streets? Are the apprentices on estates, such as carpenters and masons, predials nor non-predials? Was it ever intended that £130 should be paid by an apprentice for his liberty? This sum has been demanded of John Wright, of Savanna-la-Mar. My dear sir, I have done my duty, and, were I in England, I would do it wherever my voice could reach. Do pity suffering Africans!

"For this I may expect to be called before the House of Assembly, when they meet; but I cannot take the oath they administer. Do get this question settled, or I may expect two months in jail."

The closing sentence of this extract requires a brief explanation. The form of oath which the House of Assembly thought fit to adopt, required the party to answer "*any question*" which might be proposed *on any subject*. For refusing to take this oath, Mr. Abbott had already been imprisoned by them. In common with his brethren, Knibb felt an objection of conscience to this oath, and on the 17th of March he had written to Mr. Dyer concerning it in the following terms:—"Come what will, I never can, without violating my conscience, take such an oath, and I am determined that I never will take it. I wish to pay all proper respect to the powers that be, but with me this is a matter of conscience. I believe that I should sin against God if I took such an oath. Such are my views, and while they remain unchanged, my conduct will accord with them."

The boldness and publicity of Knibb's proceedings in Jamaica created some uneasiness at home; and the secretary forwarded to him some cautions and suggestions, the nature of which may be sufficiently judged of by the following reply:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, October* 19, 1835.

"It affords me pleasure to inform you that there is at present not the least necessity for warning the people of my charge against hostilities, as I am not cognizant of a single instance in which any one of them has in any measure interfered, except by one or two of them voting with me for Mr. Farquharson, who is a Christian, and who has succeeded in being returned for this parish. My impression is, that the interests of humanity are far more effectually promoted by a public exposure of whatever is illegal and inhuman in the stipendiary magistrates, than by secret measures; and I think that if there were funds to prosecute them for their manifest violations of law and decency, it would be a great blessing to the unhappy victims of their power. I have, however, frequently acted upon your suggestion in minor cases, with happy effect, and since my exposure of the cruelties practised at the workhouse on pregnant women, the whole system has been changed. An order has been given by the local magistrates to prevent the sentence being executed in all such cases; and in the new code of laws, I and all other ministers are permitted to visit the workhouses whenever we please. I regret, however, that some of the specials yet sentence females in this state to this punishment (the treadmill), and by last week's *Watchman* you will perceive that one was delivered as she left the wheel, and died.

"If these men are not stopped by their conduct being held up to public view, I am very fearful that more victims will descend to the grave through the exercise of their tremendous and, apparently, irresponsible power."

The committee of the Baptist Missionary Society had cultivated a spirit of reserve as to the publication in England of particular facts, more especially with the names of the parties. This, on the contrary, Knibb was continually urging—it was the essential element of his policy. The following was his reply to a communication from Mr. Dyer on this subject, in vindication of his course:—

TO MR. DYER.

"In referring more particularly to your communication, I cannot forbear saying that, with all the deep respect I feel for Mr. Gurney, I cannot fully concur in the sentiments it contains. I had no private feelings to gratify in sending the letters home, but I did think that the publication and perusal of such documents would tend to show the people of England, what kind of beings the government salaried to see the abolition law carried into effect. Thousands have been the unnecessary lashes Mr. —— has given, multitudes has he degradingly flogged without mercy, and I longed to be rid of a personification of cruelty. I am thankful that I have succeeded. He has been removed, so that my poor people are relieved of his cruelty, and of the harshness of his administration of the law. Since he has left, which is now more than two months, in the whole of his jurisdiction there has not been a lash inflicted by his successor, while content and harmony are generally prevailing.

"You may not think matters so bad as they are represented, but I assure you they are worse. Although here and there are bright exceptions, oppression is the order of the day; and where it is checked, it is at a sacrifice of feeling and of time which, I regret to say, is little esteemed at home. When Mr. Daughtrey, a good man, a special magistrate in St. Elizabeth's, was with me, he assured me that nothing he had ever read or heard in England came half up to the horrors of the system of slavery.

"And when, my dear sir, you remember that all this bloodshed, these murders, these pollutions, are committed by men paid by the British people to defend the poor and the oppressed, can you for a moment wonder that your missionaries stand forward; that, when they behold the bleeding back of the Christian rising into manhood, and of the hoary-headed saint hastening into eternity, mangled and torn, they speak their minds; or that, while they exercise the patience of piety, and the finer feelings of the mind, by pouring into the sufferer's heart the balm which religion supplies, they endeavour by every constitutional means to arouse those who have the power to remove from office the merciless executioners, paid to celebrate the *auto-da-fé* of liberty?

"It is but a few days since that I supplied the pulpit for my brother Clark, at Brown's Town, who combining tenderness of spirit with a hatred of oppression, has been the means of bringing much iniquity to light. The chapel was crowded, and hundreds were outside. My spirit rejoiced, while, standing on a bench at the door that those outside might hear, I proclaimed to them the love of God. Every eye was fixed, every heart appeared to feel the truth so astonishing to guilty man. I felt I know not how, but as if I could spend and be spent among them. It was a foretaste of heaven. But, my dear sir, on descending to the house to prepare to administer the Lord's supper, there stood a brother in Christ, of the same age as myself, and about the same size. 'Sir,' said he, 'look at my back.' I did look; and O that Britains' queen could have looked too! It was still bleeding, and was swelled from the shoulder downwards, fully as thick on one side as my wrist. From it my heart recoiled. Then up came another, whose back appeared literally as if it had been punctured with an iron instrument. They told me that the new special magistrate, Mr. Fife, had ordered them to be flogged the day before for having lost time. My heart bled for them. I gave them what consolation my feelings would allow, and prayed that the accursed system might be blotted from the earth.

"If, my dear brother, I have expressed myself too warmly, you will forgive me. I consider that I am writing a private letter, though I do not care one tittle if all is published."

After the perusal of these letters, some of my readers may be disposed to ask me why I should now publish representations so harrowing to the feelings, so prejudicial to private character, and so useless? Assuredly, if I had believed them useless, they would not have appeared in these pages. It seems to me, however, that one of the great uses they are adapted to answer is yet to be secured, namely, the vindication of the author of them. The facts constituted the ground on which he acted, and they constitute also the ground on which his actions are to be justified. To omit them were to abandon him, without defence, to the imputation of having been a causeless agitator of the public mind.

Knibb's attention was engaged also by the cry which was speedily raised by the planters, that the half-emancipated negro would not work. On this matter he wrote to Mr. Eustace Carey in February, 1835, in the following terms :—" You may have heard that the apprentices are lazy and idle, and this is just as true, as that they have 'four parlours and a saloon.' Though attempts have been made to annoy them, and though a most iniquitous law has been passed, which compels night-work, still they submit." And thus on the 17th of March, to Mr. Dyer :—" I hope you will not believe the infamous falsehoods about the non-working of the people for wages. It is a tissue of lies altogether. The people are as quiet and as peaceable as men can be; and when they can get wages, are anxious, very anxious to work." To Dr. Hoby he afterwards wrote as follows :—" Do not believe the reports about the negroes refusing to work. Where they are treated well, and a proper remuneration is given, they work well. Take this instance. On Oxford estate the negroes were offered two shillings and sixpence for digging so many cane holes. They worked the whole of the night (Friday), it being moonlight, and many of them had finished by seven on the Saturday morning, when they got the money, and went to work on their own grounds."

While thus vindicating the emancipated population at large, he had the gratification of receiving an honourable testimonial to the conduct of the baptist congregations in that part of the island in particular. I extract it from a letter to Mr. Dyer dated November 10th, 1835 :—" I was with the attorney-general last week. During the conversation he informed me that letters had been written to the king's house, stating that the members of the baptist congregations in this part of the island behaved the best on the estates."

He writes generally on the subject of the apprenticeship on the 30th of the same month in the following terms :—

TO MR. DYER.

" As you will naturally suppose, the apprenticeship system is a very difficult one to manage. As to the right of it, I am as much opposed to it as ever ; but I feel that the best interests, both temporal and spiritual, of the people will be promoted by endeavouring to make the best of it. I assure you this is a task by no means easy ; but, by the blessing of God, I have so far succeeded with my people, that two of the special magistrates have come to me, and have stated that the people under my charge do their work best, give them no trouble, and are the best behaved on the estates where they adjudicate.

" I hope none of the committee will think that my obtaining favour here is the result of winking at oppression. No ; I had rather die than do it. I have searched into every case that has come within my knowledge, and have obtained redress for many. The very week that the court-house was granted at the recommendation of the custos, five apprentices complained to me of oppression from him. I took up the case (whether I should have the court-house was not then decided), and it is now before the governor, through my attorney. One of them is declared free, and I think all the rest will have their liberty. I have mentioned these things, believing that you feel an interest in my welfare. I do not wish them to be known further than the committee-room. I bless God that I came here, that I went home, and that I have returned. That God may bless that society through whose fostering care I have been made an humble instrument of good to Africa (and with her interests my soul identifies itself), is my fervent prayer. A poor old negro woman came to me yesterday, I think full sixty years old. She has purchased her apprenticeship, for which she was made to pay £56 currency, and £65 for her daughter. This is St. Ann's justice. Are they not worthless lazy beings, when for such a period they fetch so much ? Say this old woman has worked forty years, commencing at twenty years of age. She has brought (unless her owner swears false) £550 to her owner, and in that time has saved £56 for herself. This too goes into the hands of the compensated slave-owner. O wretched system, blessed be God thy days are numbered ! I have seen the papers of this valuation."

A sentence in this letter will undoubtedly arrest the reader's attention, and suggest the following inquiry:—Had Knibb, then, received so very much favour from the planters as to require explanation? Something of the kind had really happened. In another of his letters he says, "You will think it strange, but I assure you that I have received more kindness, and have been treated with more respect, since my return, than ever before." In this letter he adds, "I am sure it has not been gained by concealing my views." I am sure of this too. And I am sure likewise, that it would afford me pleasure to be able to ascribe the change to genuine repentance and sincere good-will on the part of the planters; but what can be said in the face of such anecdotes as those which follow? Shortly after Knibb's return from England, a gentleman, having taken him warmly by the hand and used the most flattering language, said (having stepped into a store), "Ah! there goes a villain, who, if he had had his deserts, would have been hung years ago." I give the next anecdote in the very words of my informant.

"An eminent planter, attorney for a number of estates, had requested Mr. Knibb to use his influence in explaining the new law to the people, and urging upon them the necessity of complying with its requirements. After he had done this, he was invited to a sumptuous dinner at the 'great house,' where he met a large number of owners and others from the surrounding district. Everything passed off agreeably till Mr. Knibb had taken leave, and was descending the steps, when his hitherto polite and flattering host, turning to some of the company, said, 'You know it is sometimes necessary to hold the candle to the devil.'" I am not willing, however, to involve all in a charge of hypocrisy which may, perhaps, be applicable only to a few.

On the subject of the apprenticeship he writes to Dr. Hoby, on the 7th of January, 1836, as follows:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Falmouth, January* 7, 1836.

"I am in a land of half freedom, where there is much that is pleasing, and much to annoy. Every effort has been made in certain quarters to prevent the system from working, but hitherto in vain. The general conduct of the emancipated Africans is above all praise; nor do I believe that there is a population on the earth among whom less crime is committed. We only need perfect freedom to make the colony prosperous. This must come, and the sooner the better. I bless God for what has been done, but I do not like the apprenticeship system, because it is unjust; yet it is not slavery, and it must issue in freedom. I do all I can to prevent oppression, nor do I stand by any means alone; but do it I will, if I should stand alone. I have told the magistrates respectfully, but firmly, that let the consequence be what it may, no one shall oppress my people with impunity."

And again, on the 18th of July, in the same year:—"Things are progressing here much better than I ever expected they would; but it is a foolish system, unconnected with either profit or honour. I long for complete emancipation, though perhaps I may never be permitted to see it. What think you? 1,000 apprentices have paid £32,000 cash for their freedom since 1834, and as many more are in abeyance, besides all private arrangements; while only seven children have been apprenticed on account of poverty, or any other cause, by the parents."

As time advanced his views of the conduct of the party hostile to emancipation became more severe, as appears from the following extract:—"You will, perhaps, expect to hear something about the working of the apprenticeship scheme. I fear that it will ruin the island, if not abandoned for immediate emancipation. It is the source of much oppression; but wherever the people are treated as men, they are, as far as I can learn, working well. If the whites would but act properly, all would go on well; but this is not to be expected from the present race."

It is characteristic of the sincerity and genuineness of Knibb's hatred of oppression, that it was in its operation universal and consistent; a remark of which a striking and most interesting illustration occurred in the year 1837, in the bosom of his beloved flock. Several of the members of the church had been in possession of slaves, and were now holding the same persons as apprentices. He says in one of his letters to Mr. Dyer, that his mind had been long oppressed by this fact, but that, in consequence of the feverish state of society, he had not known how to act. It appears, however, that he had conversation on this subject with Mr. Sturge, during the course of his visit, and that the influence of this distinguished philanthropist induced him to adopt a decided course. After seeking divine direction, and after having some private conversation with the parties, he stated from the pulpit his conviction of the sinfulness of holding the apprentices, even in their mitigated bonds, and urged upon all concerned the serious consideration of his views. The greater number—all but three—at once concurred in his suggestion, and promised an immediate and unconditional release of the apprentices they held, although at a great sacrifice, and the remaining three ultimately adopted the same course. Knibb was thus relieved of a heavy burden:—"My mind," says he, "is now at rest. I have done my duty, and I do not care for the consequences." He went, however, a step further, and used his influence in Falmouth to induce others to follow the example of his friends.

On the 11th of July he thus communicated his proceedings to Mr. Sturge:—

TO MR. STURGE.

"*Falmouth, July* 11, 1837.

"I have to convey the pleasing intelligence that the poor members of my church who hold apprentices have resolved, one and all, to set them free on the 1st of August, and that the manumissions of most are already in my possession. I requested each of them to make it a matter of prayer; and when the result came I wept for joy. Not one has held back. When the first came and signed, 'There,' she said, 'I have now an easy conscience.' Another said, 'I have long wished to do it, but I have two children to support, and they are my all; but I can now trust God. My heart is at rest.' Others blamed me for not telling them of it before; and all have said that they have given the apprentices up from a firm belief that it was sinful to retain them. I have been to several persons in the town, and have succeeded in obtaining the manumission of eight or ten more, and I am trying to interest others in the matter. On the 1st of August I shall publicly read the manumissions in the chapel, and shall address the freed people and the apprentices that are left, who belong not to Christian owners. I shall have a high day, and blessed be God, the last vestige of slavery will be removed from the members of the church."

On the day appointed the manumissions were publicly delivered to the parties, in the presence of about three thousand persons. The following narration of the transaction was sent to Dr. Hoby, on the 10th of the month:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"This has been a severe trial to me, and I bless God it is over. I am deeply convinced that Christian fellowship with slave-owners is a sin, and after witnessing its accursed effects on professing Christians, I think no efforts ought to be spared to rid the church of Christ of this foul stain upon its purity. Never shall I forget the scene on the first sabbath in August, in the chapel in which I now write; although the joy was chastened by the recent loss of my beloved boy, who ardently loved the race whom he daily saw oppressed. After the forenoon service, I addressed the apprentices, expressed sympathy in their wrongs, and urged them to continue that obedience which they have hitherto manifested. I then set free twenty-seven persons, most of whom had belonged to members of my church. I scarcely ever saw such a scene. The congregation stood in astonishment. O how did I long to snap every bond, and to break every chain! This time will come. O Lord, hasten it in thine own time!"

Speaking of this transaction to Mr. Sturge, he says, "The colonial party are, of course, much enraged that I did it publicly, and are loud in their denunciations. This, however, does not at all affect me. It is when they praise me I shall feel wounded."

To a friend who had kindly offered pecuniary aid, if any personal distress should result from this act of justice, he wrote as follows:—"I am much obliged by your prompt and liberal reply to my letter, respecting the persons who had relinquished their claim to the future services of their apprentices. The only one who I feared would need it was one who gave up seven predials, and who is very old. I am not certain, however, that even in this case I shall be necessitated to use the money you are so willing to give, and I most certainly shall not unless there is urgent need. Of the others I have no doubt. They make no complaint of loss, and as they are young, there is no fear but by honest labour they can supply their wants. Should I find it necessary in the course of the next two years to apply for a moiety of the sum granted, I will do it, but I very much hope that it will not be needed. It will be an additional gratification if all, however old, are enabled to do without aid, after having acted on the principles of righteousness and truth."

Referring afterwards to the same subject, he says:—"While I do rejoice that my people have made (to them) a great sacrifice, I cannot but be deeply humbled by the deep reflection that they never possessed the least moral or proper right to that which they relinquished. Blessed be God that they have seen their sin, and have given up that which was never justly their own."

I turn now to the general subject of the apprenticeship, the evils of which grew more and more terrible every year. On the 11th of July, 1837, Knibb wrote thus to Mr. Sturge:—"Leave no plan untried to get this abominable system down in 1838. The planters are beginning to expect and fear it, and I hope they will not be disappointed."

On the 10th of August, he uses the following language on the same subject to Dr. Hoby:—"Matters have been daily getting worse, and if the negro was not formed for the endurance of unparalleled wrong, there would have been an insurrection long ago. I assure you my heart sickens at the view, and nothing but the paramount claims of stern duty keeps me where I am. I do most ardently hope that something will be done in 1838 with the apprenticeship; my firm conviction is, that the prosperity of the island depends upon it. Let every one do his duty, and then let the result be calmly left in the hands of Him who doeth all things well."

On the 15th of August he wrote to Mr. Sturge as follows:—

TO MR. STURGE.

"Yesterday a poor old man, named Alexander Bunn, or Dunn, from Felston estate, a member of my church, came home with his nose broken by a stick, and his shirt well stained with blood. His brutal overseer had inflicted this. The poor old man wept like a child. I felt as if I could slay the system of oppression; O that I could! I sent him to the special magistrate, who will perhaps fine the overseer a few dollars, not a fraction of which the sufferer will receive; or perhaps he will reprimand him, while revenge will be sure at length to fasten upon the aged slave. O that the Christian slave-owners in England could see, with the eyes of truth, the accursed system they uphold and defend!"

The following extract is from a letter to the same party dated the 12th of September, 1837:—

TO THE SAME.

"There is a great deal of excitement now in the country, and if something is not done, either to ameliorate the condition of the people, to facilitate the purchase of their freedom, or to protect mothers with infants, my firm belief is that the island will be half ruined. Could you not persuade Lord Sligo to set his apprentices free? One or two such acts would blow the system to atoms. Of this I am confident: I know that some persons are writing home to the owners to begin paying wages in 1838. Try, try, I beseech you, with Lord Sligo; he can abolish it at once. O that he would take the honour!"

On the 18th of September, after adverting to the rancorous malice with which he was assailed, he says to the same correspondent—"Well, I fear them not. I denounce the apprenticeship wherever I go: and so strongly do I feel on the subject, that, were I not so deeply in debt, I would come home, and have another hit at the monster. There is a guilty attempt to revive some of the worst features of the old system, and I do hope the Anti-Slavery Society will watch these gentlemen narrowly. My firm belief is that many long for another insurrection, that they may murder more negroes. I pray God to defeat their counsels."

On the 17th of October, he says, "There is a growing disposition here to have the system broken up in 1838, and I have hopes that it will be accomplished. God in his mercy grant it!" Towards the close of the year, however, his hopes were again damped, and he wrote to Mr. Sturge in the following terms on the 16th of December:—

TO THE SAME.

"I very much fear that the apprenticeship will drag its slow length to its proposed termination; but even should this be the case, your visit will have done an amount of good which few can appreciate who are not on the spot. Many proprietors wish for a very great amelioration in the miscalled Abolition Law. The exposure of abuses, and the knowledge that they are sure to be exposed, is a great preventive, and a careful watching of new laws will be the salvation of Jamaica. Should you fail in a reduction of time, you have already triumphed in a reduction of misery. Three or four treadmills are stopped; and although there is enough to deplore, and ever will be, under this system of wrong and folly, yet there is hope in the distance, and by a careful, a never-sleeping watching of colonial laws, you will secure, at the termination of this system, liberty to the enslaved. Ever bear in mind, my dear friend, that the present laws affecting free labourers are more abominable than the Stanleyan mockery itself, that these all expire in 1840, and that on what is then done (a resolute attempt will be made to re-enact them) the freedom of the black depends. I do feel deeply on this subject. I hope, if the present Assembly is dissolved, we shall have a few more liberal men returned; but from English patriots must come, if it come at all, the Magna Charta of Africa's rights. If this is neglected we are all undone. Vassalage of the worst description will be the result, and the boon of liberty, after six years' probation, will be stained with the tears and the blood of its ever cheated expectants."

Throughout the spring of 1838, when information had not reached the colonies, either of the efforts of the abolitionists, or of the proceedings of the British parliament, the pro-slavery party in Jamaica appear to have become very highly excited. Preparation was necessary for carrying out that part of the abolition act which required the emancipation of non-predial slaves on the 1st of August, 1838, and the nearer prospect even of this partial change seems to have driven some parties almost to madness. Of the state of feeling then existing, however, the reader will be best enabled to judge by reading a letter addressed by the missionaries jointly to Mr. Dyer, on the 8th of March. It is as follows:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Lucca, March* 8, 1838.

"It is with emotions of deep regret that we are compelled to draw the attention of the committee to the peculiar situation in which the baptist mission in this island is now placed. We have every reason to fear, that a secret and powerful combination is forming among the interested advocates of slavery to effect a commotion among the apprentices on the first of August ensuing, that they may be thus furnished with a pretext for coercing those who will be then entitled to their freedom, and for sacrificing the lives of those missionaries who have advocated the rights of the negroes, and protected them from the lawless violence of their oppressors.

"This information has reached us from sources on which we can confidently rely; and the ill-concealed malignity of those bloodthirsty men, combined with the influence of that polluted portion of the press which is weekly employed in exciting and fostering every diabolical feeling of the mind, justly induce us to seek that protection which a knowledge of these circumstances points out as our immediate want.

"We wish the committee distinctly to understand, that we are not influenced by personal fear in making this representation. To avail ourselves of that protection which the British government is bound to afford, appears to us a sacred and imperative duty; and having thus discharged it, we shall continue to pursue our path, undismayed by the threats which are daily used to intimidate us, leaving the event in the hands of that God whose servants we are, who has hitherto protected us, and in whose service we hope to live and die. We request that the committee will take such immediate steps as may secure us from the violence of depraved men, and the mission property from destruction. Still, while we cannot refrain from making you acquainted with our position, and imploring your aid, we are anxious that this communication should not be made public, lest, if circulated in this island, our enemies should imagine it to arise from a sense of insecurity or a dread of their power, and thus derive encouragement to perfect their wicked designs.

"We are, dear sir,
"Yours faithfully,

"THOMAS BURCHELL,
WILLIAM KNIBB,
THOMAS F. ABBOTT,
WALTER DENDY,
BENJAMIN B. DEXTER,
JOHN HUTCHINS,
JOHN CLARK,
SAMUEL OUGHTON,
DAVID DAY."

There is something about this letter which startles the reader, and makes him peruse it with surprise, and even with incredulity. Could it be true? Were not these worthy brethren imposed upon by their imaginations or their fears? The impression suggested by these questions was, I believe, the prevailing one in this country. It is by no means certain, however, that it was the correct one. The number, character, and experience of the men who signed it combine to attach great weight to it. And what did Knibb himself think of it? The reader shall know.

His personal sentiments on the subject of this letter were thus conveyed to Mr. Dyer a few days afterwards:—"You will ere this have received a joint letter respecting the coming August and its consequences, and I do hope that you will not lose any time in obtaining protection for the mission property and the missionaries. I am more and more convinced that dissatisfaction will if possible be excited, and I shall strain every nerve to prevent the success of the scheme. This week I have called a special meeting of the officers of the church, to whom I shall fully explain my views."

At the same date he thus expressed himself to Mr. Sturge, in a tone of deeper depression than I have observed in any other of his letters: —

TO MR. STURGE.

"O that the winds of heaven would blow this increasingly abominable apprenticeship to the abodes of those who enacted it, and fastened it upon the necks of the hapless slaves! At times I am ready to despond, and it is in some such mood that I commence this letter. Whether the agent of evil now at work will be permitted to succeed in creating a disturbance next 1st of August I know not, but that he will make a bold attempt I have every reason to believe. We are now four months from the change, and the question who are predials and who are non-predials is not fully settled, or at all explained to the people. Party feeling is running high, and the polluted and degraded press is urging my arrest, as the ringleader of sedition. The most abominable falsehoods are invented to influence the public mind, directed solely against the baptists, and chiefly against a few of them. I have been informed secretly, that if the plan succeeds, and any riot is the result, my death is resolved on as the first that shall be sacrificed, the abettors of slavery rightly supposing that a baptist missionary's blood would be the most acceptable offering to the expiring monster. Well, if my Heavenly Father thus permits, His will be done! Leave I will not; cease to protect the hapless victims, the much traduced labourers of this island, I dare not; and if the British Christian public will not demand protection for those who toil to the death in trying to instruct those who have been by British cupidity so grossly injured, upon them rest the guilt. I assure you, my dear friend, that we, as baptist missionaries, need your prayers and your strenuous efforts. Our foes are enraged; Christians of other denominations (at least some) by their conduct encourage them; the high church party are using every effort to annoy; and the devil is raking hell for the worst feelings with which to madden the hearts of besotted slave-owners, that thus we may be destroyed. The fact cannot be doubted, that your visit, with other concurrent circumstances, has disconcerted their plans, has blasted their hopes of fastening, under a different name, all the heaviest fetters of slavery on the docile African, the moment he dreamt he was free. Hence the rancour, hence the strife, hence the hope of another rebellion, that thus they may violently effect what they formerly fully expected to effect silently, by the powerful influence possessed at home. Unless you are up and doing, unless a demand strong as the exigency of the case is made, 1840 will no more see the termination of slavery than it will the final triumphs of the cross. Everything is at present quiet, and would continue so if proper steps were taken; and I have a good hope that, by our united efforts and prayers, God will yet frustrate the designs of his enemies. It may, however, be his determination to purge with blood this wicked island, though I would fain hope, and humbly believe, that his mercy will be still vouchsafed. While all places of power are filled by men who hate liberty, and hate also those who are determined to protect the negro, we have but a poor prospect before us, except in the reflection that greater is He that is with us than all they that are against us."

The letter to Dr. Hoby, from which the following extract is taken, dated on the 28th of March, is written in the same strain of melancholy anticipation:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"By this packet I send you a copy of the *Royal Gazette*, in which you will see a violent attack upon me, distinguished by falsehood and malice, which is doubtless intended to prepare for any sanguinary proceedings on the coming 1st of August. I think it my duty to inform you that there is an attempt in progress to excite discontent among the apprentices, for the avowed purpose of murdering some of the most hated baptist missionaries, and that I stand first in the list of those who are to be sacrificed by the bloodthirsty tyrants who still prowl about Jamaica, and who cannot endure the thought that the negroes should be free. I have every reason to believe that the scheme will fail, but it is quite necessary to be fully prepared. We are using every effort, and shall continue so to do, to guide those who are to see the gate of freedom opened throughout the island, to see a few pass through it, and then to see it closed for two years without any hope to them. It is severely galling, that while to us is owing the present peaceful state of the island, while we are often diverted from our work to secure its temporal harmony, a vulgar rabble of witless editors should excite the guilty and base passions of demoralized slave-owners against us, without the slightest hope of our obtaining redress; but so it is. Everything would go on well if these brutes would let it; but they long for the negroes' blood, they think to mutilate the body of the hated and murdered missionary, and unless they are swept away by the besom of destruction, they will still endeavour to raise a tumult, that their depraved passions may luxuriate in the devastation of the island. May the Lord forgive them! 'Cursed be their anger for it is fierce, and their wrath for it is cruel.'

"I feel, my dear brother, that I have toiled to the utmost of human strength for the happiness of Jamaica; but if the government do not throw round us the shield of protection, if they do not, by some well concerted scheme, destroy the hopes of the besotted haters of all that is good here, be not surprised if you hear that my blood, and that of some of my brethren, stains the already blood-saturated soil of Jamaica. Every effort is now making to destroy our influence; and planters, newspaper editors, and a motley group, with no other affinity but their hatred to liberty, are joining hand and heart on this occasion. But they will fail. Leaning on the Rock of ages, we fear not. We shall come from the ordeal refined; and if bearing the ark of negro freedom, rejoicing that our Heavenly Father has counted us worthy of conveying the sacred treasure."

In the month of May, intelligence reached Jamaica of the successful agitation of the public mind at home to which the movements of Mr. Sturge had given origin, and of the probable passing of the bill which the government had brought forward for the total extinction of the apprenticeship on the 1st of August, 1838. The effect of these tidings was immediately visible. The pro-slavery party saw that the prospect of maintaining the state of servitude was gone, and they yielded to a necessity now too plainly inevitable. The whole face of things, consequently, was quickly altered. All was preparation for freedom. No one was more keenly alive than Knibb to this change. It reanimated all his hopes, and gave new life to his correspondence. On the 29th of May, he says to Dr. Hoby—"By the *Falmouth Post*, which will reach you by this packet, you will perceive the rapid strides which emancipation is making. There is scarcely the shadow of a doubt that, in a very few weeks, the inhabitants will all be free. The coming change so fully engrosses my attention that I have scarcely any time for correspondence, so that you will excuse a shorter epistle than I would fain send. The apprentices now fully expect to be free, and it would be madness to try to withhold it from them. I told the whole of my congregation that I fully expected they would be free on the 1st of August, and bid them prepare for the interesting change. The scene was one of the deepest interest, and was almost too much for me to bear. The friends of the oppressed have done nobly in England, and the thankful hearts and fervent prayers of the enfranchised slave will be a portion of their reward."

The approaching change made him, not only full of joy, but full of business. On the 28th of June he tells Mr. Sturge that he had then spent a fortnight "in riding from estate to estate, and holding public meetings," in order to make the apprentices authentically acquainted with the fact. "I have been delighted," says he, "with the manner in which they have received the heart-stirring news. But," he adds, "while my soul deeply sympathized with the loud joy which broke from their lips, I yearned over the multitude of children who are yet without instruction." This is just like him, and affords me an opportunity of inserting an extract of a letter on this subject of a date a few days earlier.

"The coming emancipation will set free thousands of children about ten years of age to whom we have had no access; our schools will be thronged to excess, and what to do I know not. I could at once establish full six more day schools, if I had but the means. I have young men ready, and the desire for instruction is now greater than ever it was. Thousands of poor, long neglected children, who at six years old were made apprentices, but who will now be free, earnestly desire it. O how ardently I long to feed these lambs! but I cannot. To behold mental misery longing to be relieved, and to be unable to impart the relief, is to me most distressing.

"When all are free they will help themselves—this I doubt not—but we want something immediately to commence. Think, my dear brother, that all the labouring population of six years old were bound to work for their owners. To them, except on the sabbath, we had no method of giving instruction. In eight weeks, blessed be God, they will all be free. These are to form the first free peasantry. How important that they should be at once instructed! My very heart yearns over them. O that God may appear for them in his great mercy! As soon as the apprenticeship closes I do not intend to open or continue any school that does not pay half its contingencies, and O that I could receive all that would gladly promise and do this! I have now four applications, and I will, if I can, take them all up."

Besides education, he found another subject adapted to create anxiety. It was the question, what wages "the liberated sons of Africa" should ask for their labour. Upon this also he was assiduously collecting information.

It is evident from these statements that Knibb did not allow himself to be intoxicated with joy on the arrival of complete emancipation; he rather regarded this event with a sagacious foresight, and laboriously devoted himself to the effectuation of arrangements by which the important practical problems involved in it might be safely and happily solved. In this attitude the day found him; but, as it was a holiday to him, so it must be to us, and we must cry a truce to all thoughts of difficulty and anxiety, while we apply ourselves to the contemplation of the most joyous day which ever dawned upon any land. Before we proceed to this, however, we must briefly glance at his personal and domestic circumstances.

The period now before us was marked by several changes in his family. Late in the year 1834 a son was born to him, whom he named after his friend and fellow labourer, Thomas Burchell. This child died in 1836. The appellation Augustus Africanus had at one time been intended for him.

In the year 1837 a domestic calamity befell him of the severest kind, in the loss of his eldest son, William, who died on the 25th of July, at the age of twelve years. On the 6th of September he thus announces this afflictive event to Mr. Dyer:—"My Heavenly Father has removed my beloved William from me. Thus in nine short months has my firstborn and my youngest son been taken. It has been a bitter, bitter trial; but I hope that under it I have not repined. O, he was a lovely youth; and blessed be God, I have a good hope that he is safe in the mansions of the blest."

And in reply to a letter of sympathy, he wrote on the 14th of November as follows:—

"*Falmouth, November* 14, 1837.

"You will accept the sincere thanks of myself and Mrs. Knibb, for the kind sympathy you have expressed at the loss we have sustained in the death of our beloved William. It is the heaviest stroke my Heavenly Father has ever visited me with; but it becomes me to be still, and know that he is God. He was a lovely youth, just commencing, though so young, a life of usefulness, which I fondly hoped would be long continued. Only a few days before he died he went with me into the pulpit, when I said, 'My dear boy, I hope you will preach the gospel here when I lie under yonder tree.' Ah! little did I think that in one short week I should have to lay him under its shade! Keenly, keenly, do I feel the stroke, and most earnestly do I pray that the intended benefit of such an affliction may be fully realized by myself and Mrs. Knibb."

On the 16th of December, after expressing his desire to have visited England, had it been consistent with his duty, he writes thus to Mr. Sturge :—

TO MR. STURGE.

"Long ere this, however, I may sleep the sleep of death, and, with my beloved William, be in the regions of perfect light, enjoying the liberty of the sons of God. This I can calmly leave to Him who has smitten, with the hand of love, my beloved boy to the dust. Although born amidst slavery, he detested it. Often did my mind exult at the deep love of liberty he felt. It was in him, though young, a pure and lovely flame; but it consumed him. The thought that the members of my church would set the people free overcame him. When he heard that all had agreed, he drew me a ship in full sail, with 'liberty' on her flag, chasing two slavers, and on her pendant, 'Slavery must fall.' He bounded away with a heart too full. That night the fever took him. During his delirium the same feeling formed all his thoughts. In his lucid intervals he spoke of Jesus, and earnestly prayed to be accepted through his precious blood, and I believe he was heard in these cries for pardon. Thus died my brightest earthly hope, just as a fond father thought that his anxieties were to give place to the substantial enjoyment which his devotedness to truth and happiness would have ensured. But it is right: I know it is. I do not repine, but my spirit is bruised beneath the stroke. Yet would I gather from this event a fresh impetus. I would, in dependence upon the mighty agency of Heaven, wage new war against that oppression which guilty man inflicts upon his fellow man, and by all those means which God shall bless, diffuse that gospel which, when properly felt, is sure to destroy the power of the oppressor. You will excuse these remarks. The heart is relieved by the utterance of its sorrows, and your kind reference to my beloved boy has enabled me to beguile a moment or two in recording a few words to his memory."

While these extracts touchingly express the feelings of a father's heart, they are adapted to excite a sentiment of no ordinary interest in the character of the son he mourned. Had the task not been already accomplished, I should have deemed it my duty to attempt a sketch of this remarkable child's life; but as this has already been executed by my friend Dr. Hoby, at his father's request, I have the greater pleasure of referring the reader to that interesting memoir.*

About a month after this sore bereavement, it was in a measure mitigated by the birth of another son, "which," says Knibb, "God has kindly given me for the one he took away." This child was named, after another friend and fellow labourer, James Coultart.

On the 1st of November he thus mentions to Mr. Dyer the illness of this his infant and only remaining son. "It is now very sickly here. Another of my dear children, my only boy, is very poorly, and I fear that he will soon be taken from us. Deeply have I thus been tried, but I know that it is all well."

I shall close this chapter by a few sentences indicating the religious condition of Knibb's mind, and his spirit of devotedness to his work. They are taken from his letters to various correspondents, during the entire period now under review.

"I have now been a year in Jamaica since my return, during which goodness and mercy have followed me. During that year eight missionaries have entered into rest in this island alone. O that I may be faithful unto death, and be found ready whenever the great Shepherd shall call for me!"

"In a week or two I go, if spared, to open the chapel at St. Ann's Bay. Well, what a mercy to be thus employed; and if at last a heaven of redeeming love is granted through the blessed, the precious atonement (and of this I have a humble hope), what a monument shall I be of the boundless condescension of God!"

---

* *Memoir of William Knibb, son of the Rev. W. Knibb*, &c., by James Hoby, D.D.

"You will excuse the freedom of this communication, as it is not intended for publication, or I should not have said so much about my little exertions. O that I could do more! I long to be useful, and mourn that I cannot live in the very atmosphere of the cross."

"I cannot expect much longer to labour. I have lived longer in Jamaica than most missionaries do. I do feel the debts on the stations, but I hope to live to see every one repaid. I have been very mercifully assisted in every difficulty; and though I deeply mourn the loss of my dear boy, who was just budding into active life, yet I bless God that he has been so kind to me. O that his kingdom may come more in my heart, more in my poor people, and be extended throughout this wicked island!"

◆

CHAPTER XIII.

FROM THE ERA OF FREEDOM TO HIS SECOND VOYAGE TO ENGLAND, IN 1840.

Throughout the whole of the British West Indies, the first of August, 1838, was a day of unparalleled and unbounded rejoicing. Nowhere was it more joyous than in the island of Jamaica; and nowhere in Jamaica were the demonstrations of gladness more energetic or more characteristic than in Falmouth, where alone it is my business to describe them—and there, I must further add, only so far as Knibb was concerned in them.

On the evening of the 31st of July the baptist chapel was opened for worship, a transparency, with the word FREEDOM, having been placed over the front entrance to the chapel-yard. Of course it was crowded. An hour before midnight, some verses of a dirge, composed for the occasion, were sung by the congregation, who then continued in devotional exercises till within a few minutes of twelve o'clock. After a short silence Knibb began to speak. Those who know his power over the feelings of an auditory, and appreciate with any justice the elements then in his hands, will feel no surprise on being told that his hearers were wrought up by him on this occasion to an extraordinary pitch of excitement. He pointed to the face of the clock, and said, "The hour is at hand, the monster is dying." Having heard its first note, he exclaimed, "The clock is striking;" and having waited for its last note, he cried out, "The monster is dead: the negro is free." During these few moments the congregation had been as still as death, and breathless with expectation; but when the last word had been spoken, they simultaneously rose, and broke into a loud and long-continued burst of exultation. "Never," says Knibb, writing to Dr. Hoby, "never did I hear such a sound. The winds of freedom appeared to have been let loose. The very building shook at the strange, yet sacred joy. Oh! had my boy, my lovely, slavery-hating boy, been there! Alas! he was sleeping undisturbed in the yard, nor could the sweet sounds he so much loved wake him from his rest. God has, however, given me another son, a little infant, just twelve months old. He was there, and he awoke at the sound. I took him into the pulpit, and he appeared to enjoy the enchanting scene." This touch of parental fancy the reader will forgive. The burst of exultation was followed by three hearty cheers for the queen, and by the singing of a hymn, which appears to have been composed for the occasion.

At an early hour in the morning further proceedings took place, intended to be emblematical of the extinction of slavery. A hole having been dug in the ground attached to the Suffield school-room, a coffin also having been prepared, and the ordinary instruments of slavery—a chain, a whip, an iron collar, &c.—having been deposited in it, a large concourse of persons assembled between five and six o'clock, as for the purpose of celebrating a funeral. The coffin was then duly lowered into the hole prepared for it, the congregation singing the following stanza:—

> "Now, Slavery, we lay thy vile form in the dust,
> And, buried for ever, there let it remain:
> And rotted, and covered with infamy's rust,
> Be every man-whip, and fetter, and chain."

After this ceremony, the flag of freedom, with the union jack at the corner of it, was hoisted, and three more cheers were given.

Religious services were held throughout the day, and Knibb preached at his own chapel, from Nehemiah xii. 42, 43. He presided afterwards at a public meeting, memorable from this circumstance, that all the speakers on the occasion were descendants of Africans; and greatly to their credit, both in matter and manner, did they acquit themselves. Knibb, in concluding, proposed a well-deserved vote of thanks to Sir Lionel Smith, whom he justly designated as "the highly-esteemed governor of this colony, and the ardent and sincere friend of its enfranchised population." The meeting universally rose in testifying their concurrence in this vote. In the evening the crowds retired to their homes. Throughout the day not a drunken man had been seen in Falmouth, and at its close scarcely was the voice of a stranger heard in the streets.

The second of August was also a grand day, inferior only to the first. This was appropriated to the gratification of the young. About ten o'clock upwards of a thousand children issued in solemn procession from Suffield school-room, headed by a carriage in which were six children, sons and daughters of missionaries, drawn by two horses gaily caparisoned, and bearing respectively the following mottoes—"Liberty to the Slave," and "The Day of Jubilee." The otherwise monotonous length of the procession was diversified by a multitude of banners, bearing inscriptions suitable to the occasion, and the *tout ensemble* was of course highly exciting in "the little town of Falmouth." The children were destined for the baptist chapel, to which they made their way through the principal streets, and in which they completely filled the spacious gallery. The chapel was on this occasion decorated with flowers and branches of trees, as also with portraits of Clarkson, Wilberforce, Buxton, and other friends of the negro. After Knibb had addressed the children they returned to the school-room, where they found the entire play-ground covered in with boards, and adorned with boughs; pictures also were abundant, portraits of the queen and Thomas Clarkson being placed in the most conspicuous positions. Here was spread a banquet, of which these thousand children (nearly half of them slaves two days before) partook with a degree of order and cleanliness which, we are assured, "nothing could exceed." Every one having a glass of wine, the health of Queen Victoria was drunk "with rapturous applause;" and, after drinking two other toasts—"Peace and prosperity to Jamaica," and "Success to the good town of Falmouth"—with "immense cheers," the children dispersed, making the most natural conclusion of this gala which can well be conceived, by singing, "We'll all go home together."

"Such are the facts which I have to present to the reader. While I have constructed the narrative from the documents which lie before me, I have alternately smiled and wept; I present them, however, without scruple, because they are facts—the actual manner in which the era of freedom was celebrated by the man whose life I am writing. Knibb is the soul of all this, and the soul of Knibb is here. I would exhibit it, therefore, even if I thought any part of it ludicrous. But I do not think any part of it ludicrous. I think rather, that in the remote estimate of impartial history, this scene, which addresses all its eloquence to the heart, will bear a comparison by no means disadvantageous with other celebrations, although made for the moment more imposing by the roar of artillery or the glare of pyrotechnic display.

The marked and absolute peaceableness with which the emancipated classes conducted themselves throughout these exciting days, was adapted signally to frustrate any scheme of mischief which might have been concocted among the white inhabitants; and, if nothing further had taken place, the suspicion of such a design might have been regarded as the offspring of a heated imagination. The planters, however, took care to deprive themselves of this chance. Circumstances immediately took place which proved their guilty intention, and demonstrated at the same time the ardour of that affection with which Knibb had come to be regarded by the emancipated classes at large.

No less than three wanton and wicked attempts were made to throw the new peasantry into a state of excitement, which might afford a pretext for the commission of violence.

Of the first of these attempts I cannot do better than take the following account from the *Falmouth Post* of August 8, 1338.

"At an early hour on Saturday last, it was generally known that some persons had determined to interrupt the peace of the town, by hanging the Rev. Mr. Knibb in effigy, in front of his chapel. The knowledge of this fact aroused the indignation of the members of his church, who immediately determined to prevent the design from being carried into execution. In the course of a few hours the town was filled with people from all quarters, and considerable excitement prevailed in consequence of a general belief that Mr. Knibb was to be hanged in reality. The reverend gentleman, who had been absent since Thursday evening, was on Saturday engaged in religious services at Waldensia chapel (about ten miles from Falmouth), when he received a letter by express, from Carlton estate, of so alarming a nature as to induce him to come into the town, for the purpose of endeavouring to allay the excited feelings of the people connected with his ministry. On his way down he was met by a number of armed persons, all of whom appeared to be labouring under the impression that he was to be waylaid and murdered. He succeeded in persuading them to give up their weapons, which he deposited in the body of his carriage. Every attempt, however, to persuade them to return to their homes was unavailing. They were determined, they said, to protect him at the sacrifice of their lives. On his arrival at the mission-house, Samuel Magnus, Esq., one of the magistrates of the parish, called and assured Mr. Knibb that he had adopted such measures as would prevent the party from hanging the effigy. The people were perfectly satisfied with an explanation given them in the Suffield school-room, and quitted the town with the promise of persuading those whom they might meet on the road to return homewards. Notwithstanding all the excitement that prevailed, it is gratifying to state, that not a single breach of the peace was committed."

The reader will mark the statement in this article that those of Knibb's friends who met him on the road "were under a strong impression that he was to be waylaid and murdered." It does not seem natural to ascribe this impression to the mere effect of excited feelings, or to regard it as only an exaggerated form of the rumour that he was to be hanged at Falmouth. There was much more probably a substantial cause for it. Nor is this supposition without confirmation. In the *British Emancipator* of September 19, 1838, is the following paragraph:—

> "From a private letter, with a sight of which we have been favoured, it appears that something more serious than hanging in effigy had been intended. The writer says, 'I have just heard of a hellish plot to *murder* Mr. Knibb on Saturday last. Several violent pro-slavery men, it appears, agreed to fire pistols *as if rejoicing*, at the time Mr. K. was expected in Falmouth from Waldensia, *but to fire at him*. The scheme was heard of, and Mr. K. was protected by the people.'"

To this I will now add Knibb's own statement, in a letter to Mr. Dyer. It is in admirable temper.

TO MR. DYER.

> "I know that an attempt was meditated for my murder, and had it not been for the firmness of Sir Lionel Smith, together with the determination of those who, though they have no religion, are attached to me, I should not now have been in the land of the living. I wish you distinctly to understand that I can prove that two magistrates were at the bottom of the hanging in effigy. My information is from a magistrate whose veracity is unimpeached. Besides this, a gentleman, who has sworn me to secresy, has assured me that another magistrate told him that he knew a sum of money had been collected to assassinate me. In speaking to a magistrate only yesterday, he said, 'Mr. Knibb, it is nothing but their rank cowardice that has kept them from destroying you.' I know that it is the hand of Him whose I am and whom I love to serve. Fears I have none. My calm conviction is, that I am in the path of duty, and that I cannot fall without the permission of Him who has so often been my help and my stay."

On the 15th of August another and the closing scene of this would-be tragedy was enacted. On this day, which was Sunday, advantage was taken of a fall from his horse which occurred to Mr. Ward, to make a most wanton experiment on the feelings of the black population. The following circumstantial account has been forwarded to me by Mr. Dexter :—

"Mounted men galloped over the parish, as if inspired by the demon of mischief, and at the door of every chapel, in a tone that seemed panting for revenge, announced that 'Massa Knibb was shot.' The congregations were electrified, the services were suspended, and the people flew to the door, all anxious to learn particulars; but the messenger was gone. Nobody knew who he was, and scarcely any one had seen him. The impression was made, however, that 'Massa Knibb was killed.' Men, women, and children, sobbed aloud, 'Them murder Massa Knibb.' In vain did the bewildered preacher endeavour to soothe their minds. They would not be comforted. They were maddened beyond control, and away they rushed, in droves varying from ten to a hundred, hastening to Falmouth, and uttering terrific imprecations against 'buckra people.' By the process described, the exciting news was diffused almost simultaneously through a population little short of 60,000 souls. The fiery cross of the Highlanders never went its round with greater rapidity. And the general effect was awful.

"In the meantime Knibb was preaching in his own chapel, little dreaming of this dangerous commotion. In the progress of his discourse Mrs. Knibb was informed of the tumult, and of its cause, and with admirable presence of mind, she left the chapel, taking with her the children, and proceeded directly to the market-square, in order to show the people that their fears were groundless. Still they were not satisfied. The excitement of the first comers was kept up by the thousands who continued to follow them. The three main roads into Falmouth were literally covered with human beings, crowding into a little town quite incapable of holding them. On the conclusion of the service, Knibb did all that he could to allay the ferment. To show that he was safe was easy; but it required a great deal of pains, on the part, not of himself alone, but of the magistrates also, to convince the people that no harm had been either attempted, or intended. At length order and confidence were comparatively restored. The chapels were left open for the accommodation of those who had come too far to return, and the stillness of the night was only occasionally disturbed by small groups arriving from distant parts. On the Monday morning Knibb early repaired to the chapel, and joined the people in prayer, after which he addressed them in a most tender and affectionate manner, entreating them to be tranquil, and never more to suffer such idle fears to enter their hearts. He implored them to return to their daily avocations, the people promised to comply with this request, and, after the parting benediction, they quietly dispersed."

At the desire of the magistrates, Knibb afterwards went on the several estates, to give ocular demonstration of his safety, and to allay the irritation which yet lingered there.

The effect of these circumstances upon Knibb's personal security was very beneficial. If, on the one hand, they made palpable the dangers amidst which he walked, they gave body and form to the power which really protected him. They constituted an appeal to the fears of his enemies, to which they were far from being insensible. "You will perceive," says Knibb, referring to this subject in a letter to Mr. Sturge, on the 17th of August, "that an attempt has been made to injure me, by some of the lovers of slavery: but they have been shown how powerless they are."

Foiled in their attempt at mischief in one direction, the party aimed to turn even their defeat into mischief in another. Through the press, which was at their command, they published exaggerated and erroneous versions of these transactions; affirming that, on the 4th of August, Knibb and his friends assembled without cause, and marched armed into Falmouth in a menacing manner; and further, that the people who entered the town on the 15th were baptists, brought together there by Knibb with murderous weapons, for the purpose of intimidation. These charges were, of course, groundless. In contradiction to the former of them, we have the assertion of the *Falmouth Post*, that the people assembled, as they believed, to prevent his meeting with a violent death, and that, on this end being secured, they relinquished their arms, and walked into Falmouth in perfect quietness. The imputation that he was himself armed, Knibb absolutely denies. On this subject he says to Mr. Dyer, "I have never had a weapon of any kind in my house, or carried one with me; nor do I intend it, although I am often passed by those who are armed, and who have threatened my destruction." "My principle," he says to Mr. Sturge, "is, that defensive war is unlawful, nor have I allowed a weapon of any kind to be in my house during any of the scenes through which I have passed. I often think that I shall one day fall a sacrifice; but this will not keep me from doing what my conscience teaches me is right."

The refutation of the second charge is happily effected by facts. There were held on the 15th of August no less than three large religious meetings among the baptists. "I was preaching in the chapel," says Knibb, "to full three thousand persons, Mr. Ward was preaching to twelve hundred at Piedmont, and Mr. M'Lachlan to about one thousand; so that there were scarcely any of the members but were worshipping God." The proceedings of the magistrates themselves led to the same issue. "If you have taken your impression," says Knibb to Mr. Dyer, "from the evidence given at the court-house, it does not implicate a single baptist. I was there all the time, I have watched every proceeding since, and I fearlessly assert that no proof has been offered, or found, that a single member or inquirer belonging to any baptist church, either carried a murderous weapon, or used improper language. That any came so armed into the town of Falmouth, is as gross a falsehood as ever was palmed upon the credulity of the public. Afterwards, at the request of the custos, I visited thousands of persons to tell them that they were wrong, but they were not baptists. The fact is, that there are not seven thousand professing baptists in Trelawney, in a population of full forty thousand: but there are thousands who know that I am their friend, and that my death would have been the signal for oppression to them. Subsequently to the examination at Falmouth, three individuals were sent to trial at Montego Bay, the vile newspapers asserting that they were members of my church, and I suppose the good folk at Fen Court believing this to be true. Now the truth is this, they neither of them were so. Only one made any pretensions to religion, and a very worthy man he is, of the name of Williams; he was bailed by the presbyterian minister at Falmouth. And what was the result? Just this, not one particle of evidence could be procured, and not a single bill was filed against either of them."

The reader will have perceived from the tenor of the extracts I have made, that the minds of Mr. Dyer and the committee were in some degree under an impression that the charges against Knibb were true. This arose, I believe, partly from the confident tone of the Jamaica papers, and partly from the interference of the colonial office, from which a communication had been received by Mr. Dyer, requesting that letters of admonition might be sent out. Such letters were actually sent, and they wounded Knibb deeply. "I cannot express my regret," says he, "that you should credit the foul and Satanic reports of colonial newspapers, after the many proofs you have had that they are equalled only by the father of lies in the utterance of that which is false against the baptists. The fact is, my dear sir, that were you in Jamaica, you would have far different feelings respecting Jamaica oaths from those you have now. Had those men been tried, a scene of iniquity would have been unfolded, which, while it would have cleared the baptists, would have covered the planters with as much infamy as did the scenes of 1832. They know the difference between oaths taken before an interested party, and those taken where legal men would cross examine, and where others would tell their tale too. They have gained their purpose—your letter makes me think they have gained much more than they think they have—and now, dastardly cowards as they are, they retire to concoct fresh mischief. If you will furnish me with any charge against the members of my church, I will fairly meet it; but I shall not mention the subject to them till I have your reply. I know it will cut many of them to the heart, that one whom they so much esteem as they do you, could suppose them guilty of such conduct, especially if that impression has been made by the wretched scribblers who pollute this island."

The lovers of slavery did not abandon their project of mischief without one effort more. Under the pretext that the peasantry would not work, and that there was reason to apprehend another revolt, they made first one attempt, and then another, to call out the militia. There would *then* have been a revolt, no doubt, as it was intended there should be, and the calamitous scenes of 1832 would have been re-enacted in an aggravated form, good care being taken that some who marvellously escaped the perils of that period of lawless blood-shed, should fall early victims in this. "Twice," says Knibb to Mr. Dyer, "twice already has an attempt been made in this parish to call out the militia, the same militia that committed the murders in 1832. The firmness of the governor alone has prevented the effusion of blood. However patient the negroes may be, to be taunted that they shall be shot, and to know that the militia were ordered to have their balls in readiness, is enough to disturb even such unparalleled patience as they have manifested." "The militia have been ordered out," he writes to Mr. Sturge. "The governor has stopped it, or I am confident I should have been numbered with the dead."

The class of engagements in the first instance claiming Knibb's regard after emancipation, were those more immediately proper to his missionary calling. In all my former references to these I have noticed preaching stations and schools distinctly; it will henceforward be more convenient to notice them, blended as they had become into one system, conjointly. I must observe also that his correspondence on this subject will now be found to be impregnated with a new element, namely, a desire to relieve the pecuniary burdens of the society, a topic on which pressing exigencies had necessitated a communication from the secretary some little time previously.

The extracts which I shall now introduce from his correspondence will commence with a date immediately anterior to emancipation; a circumstance which will have its advantage, as serving to show the identity of the spirit which animated him in the two periods.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, June* 12, 1838.

"The coming delightful change on the 1st of August involves the deepest responsibility. My soul yearns over the multitudes of young that in six weeks will be set free, for whom no instruction is prepared. They were six when the apprenticeship began, they are now ten and eleven. Before we could not reach them, now we can; therefore I cry for help for them. Let me not, I beseech you, cry in vain.

"I brought that part of your letter referring to money matters before the brethren at the quarterly union, and I do hope that next year something will be done. I propose then to state plainly, that, except in a very few instances, no drafts for chapel or other rents should be allowed, and that the sum drawn by each station, that is, by each missionary, should be £200, leaving the church to supply the rest. They might do it easily if they would, and they ought to be made to do it. O that God may bless the mission! My very heart leaps for joy at the pleasing prospect before us."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth*, *July* 3, 1838.

"I must establish more schools, and increase my native agency. I need, and must have, five or six more schools immediately, and I have the men and the rooms all ready. If you will vote £200 per annum to this station for the country supplies, including all the native agency, till I reduce the debt, and after that £100, so that I may yet keep up the country stations, with the blessing of God we will do the rest. I shall have to raise £2000 per annum to keep the present stations in operation; I think, therefore, that to enlarge so interesting a field, you will feel happy to contribute a small sum. If I can do without it I will not draw it; all I want is to be free from debt. I shall rejoice, heartily rejoice, when the time is come that we need nothing from you but your prayers.

"I long to extend operations here. The abolition of slavery has thrown the door wide open. The young men rising up rejoice my heart. O that God would still bless my humble efforts!"

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth*, *September* 14, 1838.

"I sincerely hope and trust that most of the churches in Jamaica will soon support their pastors; if mine will not, I will not remain with them. I hope that next year I shall be completely out of debt, and that £100 sterling will be all that I shall require during the year to meet every expense. If I can do without this, you may depend upon it I will."

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Refuge*, *September* 25, 1838.

"The complete emancipation of the inhabitants of this colony has opened a glorious door for the extension of the gospel in the interior of the island, which will very soon be peopled by those who will fly from the tyranny which will, in too many instances, be practised. Most of the labourers' grounds are on the borders, or in the heart, of these mountains, so that they are perfectly acquainted with the most advantageous spots, both as to fertility and water, while roads at least passable are, in many instances, made. Many have already either purchased or settled on lands, and I believe that I could now, if I had the means, purchase from 500 to 1000 acres, in one of the most lovely spots on earth, where scarcely human foot has trod, for about £2 or £3 sterling per acre. This I would purchase at once. I could soon re-sell to families, in lots of from two to four acres each, which would enable the worthy members of my church, with others who are fearfully oppressed, to settle, and form a village of their own."

In the same letter he makes the following remarks on the training of native agents, which was evidently acquiring in his estimation a growing importance. The hint thus thrown out may be regarded as the germ of the theological institution subsequently established at Calabar.

"God in his infinite mercy appears now to give me time to attend to something to extend the gospel, and I long to embrace the opportunity. Two or three of my schoolmasters, natives, are daily increasing in piety, while I have others who, I am confident, under judicious training, might be made efficient in the Redeemer's cause. Now, if some of the wealthy disciples of Jesus would for a year or two take such persons, I mean by paying for their education, which could be easily attended to here, an immense blessing, at a comparatively trifling expense, would be conferred on the church of Christ in Jamaica, and a native agency prepared, fitted to carry out that extension of the gospel which is so much needed. Would not the society patronize such a plan?

"My decided conviction is, that the time is come for this to be tried, and my soul rejoices in it, and I write to you under the full impression that you will prayerfully take up the mighty subject, and have the happiness of laying the foundation of a permanent ministry in Jamaica. For some time I think it will be necessary for ministers from England to have the principal stations, as fathers to the church; and O may God, in his infinite mercy, spare those who are here, that the country stations may be thus supplied under their superintendence! But happy shall I be when even that can be with propriety withdrawn."

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, November* 6, 1838.

"I wrote you that I hoped all my future drafts for the stations under my care would be limited to £100 sterling per annum, and that this would be sanctioned by the committee. I have this year paid off £3000 of debt by extraordinary effort, but I now need, either the loan of £100, or allowance to draw it for the coming year. I have grappled with debts to the amount of £10,000 during the last four years, and I assure you I feel anxious to be relieved. I have advanced every fraction I possess in the world, and if I had more, it should go in the same cause. All I now owe is on the mission-house in which I write this, which the church will easily pay next year.

"The enlarged chapel at Wilberforce is computed to hold 1200 persons, and it is paid for. Waldensia must be enlarged, and the people must do it. Do not think, my dear friend, that we shall not be able to support the stations. I am confident, with the good blessing of God, we can support the stations, and I am fully determined that the people shall do their duty. This has been a trying year both to body and mind, but hitherto the Lord has helped us, and I hope that he still will help and bless us, and bless the whole of the mission with which we are connected."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, February* 27, 1839.

"I have now fourteen paid agents of the mission to support, besides myself and family, but the church is able to do it, and I am determined that, if possible, they shall do it. I must enlarge Waldensia immediately, but I do not want any assistance, though I know you would give it if I did, were it in your power. I merely wish to say for once that the chapels and other mission property have cost £15,000 currency (£9000 sterling), that it is all paid, and that the chapels are all vested in the hands of trustees, and recorded in the Public Office in this island. I mention this lest any should suppose that the property is mine, a reflection which I should deeply feel."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, April* 24, 1839.

"We lay the corner-stone of the enlargement at Waldensia on Saturday; it is not half large enough. Refuge is now eighty feet by fifty, but it must be enlarged. Thus, while man curses, God blesses, and amply are we thus repaid. I have not time in this to enter into any particulars respecting the stations, but the steady increase of the cause of truth is delightful. It appears a dream. The jails are forsaken, the workhouses are, in many instances, closed, the chapels and schools are filled, and crime is decidedly on the decrease. Only one person, in a population of nearly forty thousand, was found guilty of a breach of the laws at the last quarter sessions in Trelawney. So much for the influence exerted by the Baptist Missionary Society! So much for the croakings of the intended despots!"

TO MR. MIDDLEDITCH, OF IPSWICH.

"*Refuge, September* 17, 1839.

"I am sure it will cheer your heart to learn that the bestowment of temporal freedom has been associated with the extension of Messiah's reign. Both our country chapels have been enlarged, and this is the case with almost all our brethren on this side of the island, while new stations are opening on every hand. The harvest truly is great, but the labourers are few. Of course, much, very much, remains to be done. We are only on the threshold of our work. The destruction of slavery has given us an open field, which we must labour to make 'as the garden of the Lord.' I look upon our schools as the grand lever by which we shall raise the people in intelligence; and the gospel will then produce, I hope, in richer luxuriance all its precious fruits. One pleasing feature is, that many of our young men are learning to read, and they attend regularly on the means of grace. More, I am confident, would learn to read had we a better supply of effective agency; this, I hope, our day-schools will soon afford. I hope also that from thence we shall have pastors for our churches, as well as masters for our schools, while benighted Africa shall by them hear the glad tidings of salvation.*

---

* A reference made by Mr. Middleditch, in the letter to which this is a reply, to Thomas Clarkson, drew from Knibb the following remarks:—

TO MR. STURGE.

"*Refuge, September* 14, 1839.

"With respect to schools, we labour under very great disadvantages from several causes. These I will just enumerate. The total ignorance of a great portion of the people prevents their so fully appreciating the value of instruction, or the necessity of regularly sending their children, as is desirable. This feeling will, however, give way as light and knowledge advance, and our strenuous efforts are constantly directed towards this desirable object. The schools in connexion with the established church being entirely gratuitous, presents another obstacle to the enforcement of payment; but so fully am I, with my brethren, assured of the importance of maintaining this principle, and of trying to make the people connected with us feel independent, that we are resolved to carry it out, even though for a time the number of scholars be lessened. Eventually we shall, I have no doubt, succeed, though it may take us some time and some trouble. We are sadly, too, in want of good schoolmasters. I do not by this mean to cast any reflection on those we have. They do their best, but they are few in number, and have not, generally, that amount of knowledge which is desirable. However, myself, I prefer, under every disadvantage, training the natives, rather than always depending upon European agency. Taking into account the establishment of other schools and other circumstances, and remembering that we are only in the infancy of the pay-system, we have nothing to complain of, and I confidently hope that in a few years we shall succeed in this interesting part of our labours to our full desires or capabilities. It

"The interest still felt on the subject of liberty, and in all that concerns the Africans, by the devoted and almost sainted CLARKSON, is just what I expected. The nearer he approaches the haven where perfect freedom for ever reigns, the more ardently he pants after its bestowment on earth. I frequently gaze on his portrait which hangs in this lonely spot, with emotions of sacred joy, and my only son, though very young, lisps out his name as the friend of Africa. How I long for an hour's converse with him ere he reaches the abodes of the blest; but this pleasure I must not expect, unless Providence should make my path clear to revisit my native land. When you see him, tell him that we shall encircle him with laurel on the anniversary of our jubilee; and, if not on earth, I hope to meet him in heaven, among the redeemed of the Lord."

Knibb had the pleasure of twice visiting this venerable man, at Playford Hall, the last time in June, 1845.

is a deeply interesting part of missionary labour, and needs especially the kind attention of our friends at home, on account of the thousands yet uninstructed. Should it happen next year that the number in our schools is lessened, it will be a source of consolation to learn that the chief cause has been the number of schools that have been established. The progress which the children are making is highly satisfactory, and should God still condescend to be with us, we shall soon have efficient masters for our schools, and pastors for our churches, from among those who, a few years ago, were doomed to all the horrors of slavery."

TO DR. HOBY.

" *Falmouth*, *October* 23, 1839.

"I feel convinced that the welfare of the people depends in a great measure upon the use made of the present crisis. The abolition of slavery more clearly reveals the moral enormities it has engendered, and surely Egypt was not more cursed in her plagues, than we are by the settled filth and pollution of this bottomless-pit monster. The mental imbecility is distressing. While there is much, very much, to cheer, there is a great deal, the natural and inevitable result of slavery, deeply to mourn over.

"I am grieved at the want of schools, and at the unwillingness of too many to pay for the education of their children. I do not wonder at it, as the value of education can be but dimly seen by the parents, while the children can earn money on the estates almost as soon as they ought to come to school. I am a decided friend to the voluntary system, but the peculiar circumstances of the poor people here almost make me wish that I had larger funds at command than I can reasonably expect from them. I wish I could interest the females of Birmingham in the situation of the young girls on the estates, most of whom are the prey of the seducer. I want to establish separate schools for them, under female teachers, but what to do I know not; I have so much depending upon me now, which I fear would be suspended were I removed, that I dare not undertake any more, and yet everything appears necessary to be done. I know full well, that until the female character is raised, we never shall far advance in civilization and virtue. My very soul yearns over my beloved people, and my desire for life is increased, that I may spend and be spent among them."

I am sorry that I cannot pass over this period, without stating that imputations on the character of the baptist churches in Jamaica were found current in England in the early part of the year 1838. On this occasion they were traced, upon inquiry, to Mr. Panton, a clergyman of the church of England who had resided in Jamaica. At the request of the committee, this gentleman met a portion of that body for friendly conference; and the material portion of his statements at this meeting being taken down in short-hand by Mr. Gurney, a copy of this document was sent to Jamaica, in order that inquiries might be instituted, and explanations be given. I find in Knibb's correspondence the following letter in relation to it:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, April* 3, 1839.

"I had commenced a reply to the charges preferred against the church under my care by Mr. Panton, when W. W. Anderson, Esq., informed me, at the request of Mr. Panton, that he denied the correctness of your report, and asserted that, in fact, your letter contained the essence of falsehood. I communicate this as I heard it, leaving you to act with it as you may think proper. I shall consequently have nothing more to do with Mr. Panton. Either he has stated falsehoods, or you have forged the charges. I believe the former. You may think this rash; but is it not true?

"I cannot but regret that you have not let the world know that Mr. Panton is a slave-owner and dealer in human beings, and taken the ground that, until he repents of this sin, or as a robber of the poor black man, he ought not associate with Christians. I would not associate with him, nor do I believe that any enlightened man who holds such accursed property can be a converted man.

"He has added insult to his wickedness. In all my intercourse with so-called Christian slave-owners, I have never found one who did not try to injure the characters of the men whom he bought and sold like his cows and calves. In this age of refinement I know it is wrong to call things by their proper names; but stealing is stealing, and lying is lying, notwithstanding. Mr. Panton is guilty of defaming men who are his equals in intelligence, and his superiors in every other respect, except in the possession of wealth coined from Africa's blood. I am indignant at these men, and am at a loss to conceive why they should escape the full lash of public scorn, because the Christians they defame are poor Africans. Had Mr. Panton dared to traduce Devonshire Square, Maze Pond, Camberwell, or any of our home churches, he would not, I think, have been suffered to escape. He knows just as much of *them* as of us, that is, just nothing at all. If he says anything in Jamaica I shall reply to him, and shall most certainly not allow his clerical office to screen him from merited rebuke."

It was at this period that Knibb began to urge on the committee the commencement of a mission to Western Africa, an extension of the undertakings of the society for which it must be admitted that the freedom now enjoyed by the churches in Jamaica afforded some apparent and pleasing facilities. His views on this subject seem to have been first opened to Dr. Hoby, to whom he wrote in the spring of 1839 in the following terms:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Falmouth, April* 22, 1839.

"We have had some very interesting meetings in Kingston and St. Thomas in the Vale respecting Africa, which have rejoiced my heart, and which will, I hope, lead to some triumphant results. But what will my brother say, how will his heart expand, how will he bless the Lord, when I tell him that the first missionary is *now in Africa*, proclaiming salvation through the blood of Christ? O, it is glorious! It is glorious! Yes, my dear brother, while we have been talking, a beloved brother, one of the despised, traduced, black Christians, an African by birth, has left this island, taking with him only a letter of recommendation from his late pastor, brother Gardner, has worked his passage to Africa, and without any support or countenance, except from God, is now on the spot from whence he was stolen when a boy, telling his fellow countrymen the name of Jesus, at one of those mighty rivers where that name is unknown. O my soul, bless thou the Lord! My heart is too full.

I can scarcely write for tears of joy. May God bless Thomas Keith! for that is the honoured man's name. He has written one letter which I have seen. He does not know Greek or Latin, but he knows and feels that Jesus died to save sinners, and in the spirit of an apostle he has gone to proclaim his precious name.

"And now, my dear brother, I implore you, with all the affection of a brother, to undertake this mighty work at home. God has given you the ability. You can plead for Africa, and I do most earnestly beg you not to let this subject drop. Think of Africa, her wrongs, her sins, her openings. O my Heavenly Father! work by whom thou wilt work, but save poor, poor, benighted, degraded, Europe-cursed Africa! My affection for Africa may seem extravagant. I cannot help it. I dream of it nearly every night, nor can I think of anything else."

The highly interesting fact communicated in this letter was frequently adverted to by Knibb, when subsequently in England, and it always called forth strong expressions of sympathy and admiration. Throughout the years which have passed since then, many a heart has been inquiring whether any thing further has been heard of Thomas Keith, and a readiness extensively exists, both to sympathize in his trials and to rejoice in his success, as the facts may require. So far as I have heard, however, no information has been received from or concerning him. His noble deed, however, whatever may have been its issue, shall not be without its reward.

The suggestion of the African mission having been brought before the committee, and not immediately adopted, Knibb addressed to them in the autumn the following letter. It is due to him, I think, that it should be inserted entire.

TO THE COMMITTEE OF THE BAPTIST MISSIONARY SOCIETY.

"*Refuge, September* 17, 1839.

"It is with the deepest sorrow of heart that I have learned that the object of establishing a mission in Africa has been abandoned by you. On behalf of the guilty and perishing millions I earnestly implore your attention to this momentous question. I can conscientiously say that a longing desire to diffuse the blessings of the gospel through that ill-fated land alone induces me to intrude upon you, and no apology can be needed when such is the object of the writer.

"On what grounds you have come to the painful decision I cannot tell; but, deeply impressed with the duty and the practicability of at once something being done, I have ventured thus to address those to whom I am bound by every sentiment of gratitude and esteem. I cannot for one moment suppose that the claims of Africa are not considered urgent enough to demand your sympathies, or that the present supply of agency has led to the belief that there is not a loud call upon you for immediate action. I suppose that the difficulties are considered insurmountable, or that the want of the means is regarded as a decisive objection.

"As I have ever been sustained in the feeble efforts I have made for the emancipation of the members of my church, and the other enslaved portion of this population, by the cheering hope that it would lead to the introduction of the gospel into Africa, I feel that I should be wanting in my duty to this great cause, and to the beloved flock over which I preside, were I not to implore you to assist in the formation of a plan by which this mighty work may be commenced. As the claims of Africa are to be fully discussed during the ensuing year in London,* allow me to plead by all the love of the Redeemer, and by all the blood of Africa shed in the slave trade, that you at the same time, either with the assistance of that convention or without, adopt some definite measure on a subject to which you are invited by every consideration that can be supposed to influence the minds of devoted servants of Christ.

"But perhaps you are ready to say, What plan have you to propose? And how do you expect to carry it into execution? I would most respectfully submit the following as an answer. The plan which I would propose to the committee is, that from six to twelve pious devoted black men, whose hearts are fully in the work, should at once be trained, and should visit England to be placed for a few months in the summer either in some academy, or (which I should prefer) with some good energetic servant of Christ, for further instruction, and counsel. With these missionaries some one of us should go to any selected spot in Africa and remain a year or two, and then return and report progress, and inform the public what openings in providence might appear for the extension of the blessed cause. Some one should, if necessary, come home for a few months, to make special efforts to raise the means to carry out this enterprise of mercy.

---

* This refers to the Anti-Slavery Convention.

"Perhaps you will reply, Where are the men? Blessed be God, they are waiting, longing, praying to go. We have them, and I feel confident God will bless their humble efforts, if they are but sent. O! if they are but as useful in Africa as they have been in Jamaica, they will indeed reap a rich reward.

"Do the committee again ask, Is any missionary willing to risk his life in this cause! We reply, Yes. Should it appear right for me to leave this island for so long a time, unworthy though I deeply feel of the high honour, I will go; but as on this there are doubts, I am happy to inform the committee that ——— has offered himself.

"I am well aware that there are difficulties connected with any particular place, but I am quite as fully convinced that the real difficulties will never be discovered until the trial is made; and let us not forget the unparalleled difficulties through which we have been brought, by that God whose promise assures us that Ethiopia shall stretch out her hands unto him.

"It will perhaps be replied, that the raising of the funds either will be impossible, or will cripple the resources of the society. This objection is merely one of fear. It may have such an effect, or it may have quite a contrary one. I think the experience of the committee should lead to the latter conclusion. The general cry is that the baptist denomination does not do its proportion in the missionary field. Perhaps this object might draw out its resources, while it would certainly command the sympathies of numbers who are not attached to the denomination. In Jamaica we will do what we can. I hope and pray that the circumstance of some of the brethren being supported from home will not be made a handle to repress the energies of the people for their fatherland, when the committee reflect that, in almost every such case, the reason is that the stations, which are made over to the society, and therefore cannot be mortgaged, are in debt for chapels for which the people are nobly struggling to pay. There is scarcely a station in Jamaica which will not support its pastor as soon as the heavy debts on it are removed, which I hope will be in a very few years.

"I think that the first expense of this mission must be met by a general subscription, both in England and in Jamaica, and that it might be considerably lightened if some ship-owners could be found to allow passages to the missionaries, which I think would be the case. For a few years the expense of the mission would not be more than from £1000 to £1500 per annum. Half of this we would pledge ourselves to raise in Jamaica; surely the other half, for such a noble cause, could be raised in England. Should the committee for one moment think that the raising or the appropriating of this sum in Jamaica would tend to keep the missionaries on their funds, I assure them they are mistaken. I am confident you will find that those churches that feel the most for Africa, and do the most too, will receive the least from you.

"If, dear brethren, you drop this subject, my soul shall mourn in secret, but drop it I dare not, but with my life. I am confident the future welfare of our churches here depends upon their imbibing a missionary spirit; and I ask you, where ought they to commence? The land of their fathers has the first claim, and to it they are willing to respond. May God in his great mercy direct you! I again implore you to commence. If any society is bound to trust in God, it is that of which you are the committee. I assure you I have everything to bind me here. I do not believe that there is a missionary or a minister more happily circumstanced in the world; but cheerfully will I come home on this subject, without any expense to you, for my people will defray it, if you will hearken to our earnest request, and assist us in planting the banners of the cross on Afric's strand. Should you agree to commence, write, and cheer our hearts. Let brother Dutton come and supply for me for a few months; and, if you wish it, I will come, and proceed to Africa, and see if we cannot find out a place for the Lord, an habitation for the mighty God of Jacob."

On this subject he further unbosomed himself to Dr. Hoby in the following terms, about the same period:—"Our people long to engage in the glorious conflict, and deeply do we feel the refusal of the committee to concur in the work; but stop for that it must not. If for bleeding Africa they have no bowels of compassion, remember, my dear brother, Jesus has. I implore you, by all her miseries, by all her wrongs, by all her degradations, by her vast extent, to come forward to her rescue. I mourn that I do not feel more for her, and pray more for her; but, if I can be of the smallest use, gladly will I spend and be spent for her good."

Even the persuasive letter inserted above did not induce the committee at that period to enter on a new mission to Africa, a step which grave, and I am not disposed to say insufficient, considerations prevented. It presents, however, a highly characteristic exhibition of the ardour—the constitutional enthusiasm—of his mind. It was a renewal of that irresistible excitement which impelled and sustained his exertions for the overthrow of slavery, and it constituted the power before which, in the end, all the difficulties in the way of an African mission gave way. The letter, however, is not *all* excitement. There is at least one point of grave wisdom in it,—I refer to the English training which he contemplated for Jamaica teachers—which the reader acquainted with the history of African mission will not fail to observe.

We have already seen that Knibb regarded with great anxiety the important social problems involved in the transition of the labouring portion of the community from slavery to freedom, and that, before the arrival of the day of emancipation, he applied himself earnestly to facilitate their solution. The principal question, indeed, and that upon which all the others depended, related to the wages which should be paid for labour; a question which soon gave rise to a violent controversy, and brought Knibb into conspicuous and energetic action. The part which he took in this controversy was at once too important and too characteristic not to require a just and full development.

On the arrival of freedom, the natural order of things would have been to have considered the labour of the emancipated peasantry as a new article of commerce, and for those who had it to sell, and those who needed to buy it, to proceed respectively as in the purchase of any other commodity; the one buying it as cheap, and the other selling it as dear, as he could. No price should have been fixed beforehand, price being in all such cases properly a variable element, determinable at every hour by the combined influences of demand and supply.

It was not the pleasure of the planters, however, to leave the price of labour, or (which is the same thing) the question of wages, to this issue. They had determined on taking advantage of emancipation in order to get labour very cheap, much cheaper than they had ever got it before; and they thought it certain that they yet possessed sufficient means of coercion to effect their will. They entered accordingly into an extensive combination to keep wages down, by drawing up a scale at very low rates, and pledging themselves one to another not, under any circumstances, to give more.

This, in any view of it, must have been unjust; since it was impossible that labour, under the varying conditions presented in different parts of the island, could be everywhere of the same value. But the injustice went farther than this. The sum which the planters named as a day's wages was tenpence currency, or sixpence sterling, with the use of the cottages and grounds then in the labourers' occupation. Whether this was, or was not, below the market value of labour, is a question which may be left to the decision of these gentlemen themselves; and the answer to it may be arrived at, by referring to the appraisements which had been made of apprentices who wished to purchase the remainder of their time. These had been much higher than had been anticipated; and when inquiry, somewhat in the tone of complaint, was made by the governor of the special justices on this subject, their answers explained the cause. Thus Mr. E. D. Baynes writes to Lord Sligo, in 1836:—"The value of the services of the apprentice must, and will, continue to be regulated by *the value of labour in the market.* Mr. Lord, of Bowerwood, in this parish, will not take less than two shillings and fourpence currency per day. I have myself been asked three and fourpence for work I wanted done; and Mr. Burrell will not take less than three shillings and fourpence for common labour." I find an instance in the parliamentary papers, in which a labourer who had four years of his apprenticeship to purchase was appraised at the enormous sum of £166, which was three shillings and fourpence per day for every working day comprehended in the period. Thus the value of labour, as fixed by the planters themselves when they came to sell it, was from three shillings and fourpence to two shillings and fourpence currency per day; their offer of tenpence, when joined with a cottage and land of the best description, could not be estimated at more than one shilling and eightpence.

It may be added, that the method resorted to by the planters was as foolish as it was unjust. It must have been obvious that it was of much more importance to them to get work done, than it was to the labourer to get it to do. He could procure his living without toiling on a sugar estate, but they could not make a single hogshead of sugar without him. There were difficulties enough in the way of his being induced to steady work as a freeman, to make it in the last degree unwise to create another by stinted and unfair remuneration. Besides, a combination so extended must in all probability have some, if not many exceptions, while in one of which individual members must be liable to such urgent pressure, persistency for any extended period could not be expected. It was impossible but that some planter or other would, before long, be found offering higher wages. The seeds of dissolution were in the scheme from the beginning.

Knibb, however, was not content to leave the planters to be chastised by their own folly. In addition to his indignation, which was fired by the wrong intended against the free peasantry, commiseration for their prospective poverty actuated him. "The people cannot live," said he, "on sixpence a day. This system will reduce the whole labouring population to pauperism. They shall not accept of it." His plan was soon formed, and in course of execution. It was a counter-combination of the apprentices, a universal and pledged determination not to take less than so much; the sum he proposed was one shilling and eightpence currency, or one shilling sterling, per day, with houses and grounds; and in order to effect his object, he called public meetings of apprentices, with a view to advise them on the course to be pursued. These meetings began to be held in the early part of July, and his plan was developed at them as it was gradually matured in his own mind. The following extract will afford a sample of his language at the commencement of them.

> "You will shortly, my friends, be released from your present state of bondage. In the course of a very few weeks you will receive the boon of freedom. I would therefore impress deeply on your minds the necessity of your continuing the cultivation of the soil, on the receipt of fair and equitable wages. I am not aware of any complete scale of wages having been drawn up; but I have been on ten or twelve different properties, I have conversed with several proprietors, and I am glad to say that, with some of them, there appears to be a disposition to meet the change fairly

and honourably. Those who are more conversant with figures than I am will be able to show what the owner can afford to give for the cultivation of his property: in the meantime I would say to you, Do not make any hasty bargain. Take time, and consider the subject; for it is one of vital interest and importance to all. If you demand too high a rate of wages, the proprietor will be ruined; if you consent to take too low a sum, you will not be able to provide for the wants of yourselves and families. In making your arrangements, if there be an attempt to grind you down, resist it by all legal means; for you must consider that you are not acting for yourselves alone, but for posterity. I desire to see every vestige of slavery completely rooted out. You must work for money. You must pay money to your employers for all you receive at their hands. A fair scale of wages must be established, and you must be entirely independent. If you continue to receive those allowances which have been given during slavery and apprenticeship, it will go abroad that you are not able to take care of yourselves, and that your employers are obliged to provide you with these allowances to keep you from starvation. In such a case you will be nothing more than slaves. To be free, you must be independent. Receive money for your work; come to market with money; purchase from whom you please; and be accountable to no one but that Being above, who, I trust, will watch over and protect you! I sincerely trust that proper arrangements will be made before the first of August. I have spoken to nearly four thousand persons connected with my church, and I have not yet learned that there is any disposition among them to leave their present employers, provided they receive equitable wages. Your employer will expect from you good crops of sugar and rum; and while you labour to give him these, he must pay you such wages as will enable you to provide yourselves with wholesome food, good clothing, comfortable houses, and every other necessary of life. Your wages must be such as to enable you to contribute to the support of your church, and the relief of the distressed; to secure the education of your children, and to put by something for sickness and old age.

"I hail the coming of the first of August with feelings of joy and gratitude. O, it will be a blessed day, a day which gives liberty to all; and, my friends, I hope that the liberty which it will bring to you will be duly appreciated. I trust I may live to see the black man in the equal enjoyment of every privilege with his white brethren; and I hope you will all so conduct yourselves as to give the lie to those who have affirmed, that the only idea you have of liberty is that it will enable you to indulge in idle habits, and licentious pursuits. When liberty sheds her benignant smiles on this beautiful island, I trust that the employer and the labourer will endeavour to live on terms of friendship and good-will to one another. When the labourer receives a proper remuneration for his services, and when the employer contemplates the luxuriance of his well-cultivated fields, may they both return thanks to a merciful God for permitting the sun of liberty to shine with bright effulgence! I need scarcely assure you, my friends, that I will be at all times ready to protect your rights. I care not about the abuse with which I may be assailed. I am ready to meet the scorn of those who have been accustomed to place unfavourable constructions on my actions. I am willing to meet the proprietors in a spirit of candour and conciliation. I desire to see you fairly compensated for your labour; I desire also to see you performing your work with cheerful industry; but I would again warn you not to be too hasty in entering into contracts. Think seriously before you act; and remember, as I have already told you, that you have now to act, not only for yourselves, but for posterity."

The perusal of this address will not now impress any one with an idea that the author of it was the enemy of Jamaica, or of the planters. It must be pronounced to have been, under the circumstances, extremely moderate and judicious. At once the most obvious and the most scientific answer to a man who asks, What shall I sell my labour at? would seem to be, As much as you can get. Nothing but labour was ever sold on any other principle, and there is no conceivable reason why this article of commerce—for it is strictly such—should be constituted an exception. It was moreover the rule which the planters themselves had invariably adopted, when they had labour to sell. Knibb, however, did not go this length. He said to the labourers in substance, It is important that sugar should be cultivated; therefore, if you can get enough to keep you, take less for your labour in the cane-field than you could make of it elsewhere. This certainly was a concession to the planters, to which they ought not to have been insensible. That he did not go all the way with them, and say, Take whatever is offered you—that he said rather, Do not take less for making sugar than you can live upon, while you can get more by other means, is a thing for which no friend of equity can blame him, and for which every friend of humanity must applaud him.

The machinery upon which the planters relied for the accomplishment of their purpose was constructed out of the fact that, as the apprentices were, and the slaves had been, so the free labourers would be, in the occupation of cottages on the estates (there were no others for them): on these they had no hold as tenants, so that they might be ejected from them at any moment, and an arbitrary rent, without limit, might be imposed, if they were permitted to remain. Some of the attorneys made themselves very busy in serving notices to quit, before the arrival of the day of emancipation; and no other idea was for some time entertained, I believe, than this, that the peasantry could, and would, by this cruel and wicked method, be coerced into the acceptance of whatever wages might be offered them.

The struggle on this point was severe, and even desperate; but Knibb did not flinch from it. He thus addressed a meeting of apprentices, two thousand five hundred in number, on the 19th of July:—

"For my own part I shall not shrink from those duties which I owe to my people. As soon as it was known that the apprenticeship was to cease, I used every means in my power, in connexion with my friends of other denominations, to bring about a proper feeling between employers and labourers. Our worthy chairman and myself visited several properties, explained the nature of the change that was about to take place, and did our utmost to promote the kindliest feelings among all parties. Promises were made to us which have not been fulfilled, and those who have forfeited their pledges must suffer the mischievous consequences which may ensue. On a number of estates the hopes of the labouring population were excited to a considerable degree, but those hopes have been destroyed by the subsequent conduct of persons, who, in the first instance, promised all that was liberal and just. I deeply regret that the managers of some properties have made the attempt to grind the labourers down, by an offer of wages which it would be the highest folly in them to accept. I am determined that my people shall not be imposed upon, if I can help it; and I wish the persons who compose this meeting distinctly to understand, that I will oppose to the utmost of my power all unjust and inequitable measures, let them proceed from whomsoever they may. I am no advocate for the payment of such a rate of wages as will entail ruin upon the proprietor. No. 'Live and let live,' is my motto. Pay the labourer a fair amount for his services, and he will be willing to work with cheerful industry. I have now a letter in my pocket addressed to the principal proprietors in England, in which I have denounced the deceptious conduct of the attorneys in their employ; and if I cannot procure for the people that justice to which they are entitled, I will put myself in the first vessel that sails for England, and, on my arrival there, I will meet the proprietor face to face, and tell him, 'The people are inclined to work, but your attorneys will not pay them fair wages; and I have therefore come to England, to obtain for them that justice which is denied them in Jamaica.' If the attorneys will act fairly, I will do all in my power to facilitate arrangements; but, if, by secret meetings at Montego Bay, if, by a remodelling of the infamous Colonial Union, they think to oppress the people, they will find me their enemy. I know their machinations very well. They want the people to work for a shilling currency per day. The people will not do anything of the sort; they would be great fools if they did. I have seen a scale of wages made out by planters upon equitable principles. Let those who offer their shilling per day publish their scale; and, if they will prove by figures that estates cannot afford to give those wages which I think reasonable, I pledge myself to meet them in a spirit of fairness; but I must not be told that the incidental expenses of a property are so high, as only to enable an attorney to give such an amount for labour as must inevitably make Jamaica a land of paupers. I have the evidence of slave-holders to the fact, that two shillings and sixpence a day can be paid to the field labourers of a property making two hundred hogsheads of sugar, and one hundred puncheons of rum, with a clear profit to the proprietor of £4,570. If that is not enough, I should like to know what is. But it is said, 'The small estates will suffer. What are the proprietors of these estates to do?' Why, let them come out, and attend to the properties themselves. If their properties are capable of yielding only small profits, what right have they to employ attorneys at £200 and £300 per annum, while they drive in their carriages through Regent Street, and have their boxes at the opera? If their means are small, they must not expect to grind the negroes down to support them in their extravagance. Let them do away with the attorneys, and rent their properties to honest overseers, who will find means to carry on successful cultivation. These persons will then become small farmers; they will get married; show examples of industry to the labourers; live comfortably; and by coming down with the cash, be in no want of workmen to do all they require.

"It has been said, that I am the friend of the black man only. I deny it; but I deny also the right of having our sympathies called forth for the white man at the expense of the negro. I sympathize with the oppressed, whether he be black or white. This is no political meeting. In fact, I do not exactly know what is called a political meeting in this country. Politics, to me, are altogether inexplicable; they are like a round ball, you never can find the end. I have called this meeting for the purpose of telling my people what I consider is calculated to prevent imposition, and I should be unworthy of the trust reposed in me by them, if I did not interfere. I pledge myself, by all that is solemn and sacred, never to rest satisfied, until I see my black brethren in the enjoyment of the same civil and religious liberties which I myself enjoy, and see them take a proper stand in society as men. The question of wages was mooted the other day at Green Park estate. It was proposed that I should be requested to attend; this was objected to, and I know by whom. I care nothing about the objection. I did not want to go there. But if the attorneys are to have their meetings, we will have ours. They may attempt to frighten us with their notices to quit. Don't be frightened by them. I know that Mr. Matthew Mitchell has been very busy in serving these notices;

but I beg leave to assure him, that I have taken good care to point out to my friend, Joseph Sturge, the necessity of calling the attention of the British government to that part of the Jamaica Abolition Act, which enables the attorneys to frighten the people into the acceptance of low wages. I have felt it my duty to endeavour to cover you with the mantle of British protection, and I have not the least doubt that, in the course of a few weeks, we shall receive the welcome intelligence, that that portion of the law which places so iniquitous a power in the hand of the planter has been disallowed. What will become of their notices to quit then?

"I am confident, my friends, that you will labour for fair wages. We all know that, during the reign of slavery, the labourer would sometimes prefer taking a dose of salts to digging a hundred cane-holes, and show me the white jobber who would not do the same, under similar circumstances; but when freedom comes, there will be no occasion to take salts unless you are really sick. You must labour industriously, and show your enemies that there is no occasion to import immigrants for the cultivation of the soil. Immigrants, indeed! I should like to know what good they have done. Bring Mr. Lemonius here, and he will tell us how many hogsheads of sugar his darling immigrants have made. I know that all the good they did was to put £15 per head into his pocket. And what became of them? They have not yet made one hogshead of sugar; but they have drunk lots of rum. They are a worthless, drunken, reprobate set; and, had it not been for the charity of the negroes, they would have died from starvation. These are the people whom Mr. Lemonius brought here to do such wonders. Another individual in this parish, a big man too, and a slayer of fat oxen, has said that, sooner than give two shillings and sixpence per day to the labourer, he will import a cargo of Maltese to cultivate his properties. He may do as he likes with his money, but this I will assure him of, that he may hold a cup of the choicest of teas in either hand, but he will get no sugar to sweeten it unless he employs blackey to make it. All I require for my people is fair wages. If the attorneys will offer one shilling and eight-pence per day with houses and grounds, or two shillings and six-pence without, I should say, accept the offer. Be as independent of the estates as possible. With regard to medicine and medical attendance, I know you will be able to pay these if you are properly remunerated for your services. It has been said, that it is my intention to import a cargo of doctors from England. I never said so; but this I say, that I can import a cargo of anything I please, and I will do all I can to benefit the negro. I have already advised you not to be frightened at the notices to quit which have been served upon you. If your present employers serve you with any, quit the properties; you will find employment elsewhere, and they will be ruined by their folly. In endeavouring to swamp you, they will swamp themselves. If they are blind to their own interests, and drive you from their properties, there is plenty of crown land in Jamaica, and you can resort to that in case of extremity. I have had an offer of a loan of £10,000, from a friend in England; and if it be necessary, that sum shall be appropriated towards the purchase of lands on which you may locate yourselves, if your present employers force you to quit the properties on which you now live.

"I hail the labouring population of Jamaica with joy; and I trust that the propriety of their conduct will at all times inspire me with confidence in their behalf. Be kind to your wives; lighten their labours. I was glad to hear one of my people some time ago say, that he wished his wife to refrain from hard labour, and turn her attention to domestic affairs, so that when he came home he might sit down and take his meals 'like a gentleman.'

"If, then, Mr. Chairman, it be asked, what is your intention, what is your desire? We fearlessly answer, The prosperity of Jamaica. We are determined, by every lawful means, to preserve her peasantry from the miseries of extended pauperism and debasement. The past conduct of our people demands that we protect them; the extinction of slavery in America demands that we protect them; our fidelity to God demands that we protect them; and, relying on the justice of our principles, we are determined that we will protect them. Let the enemies of liberty secretly combine as they please; let them endeavour to oppress the peasant as they formerly trampled on the slave; we tell them they shall not succeed. With the omnipotence of a British parliament, with the voice of a free nation, with a governor who feels the worth of the people he governs, with a noble band of patriots engaged on our side, and, with the blessing of Heaven, we must prevail. Maintain the character, my Christian friends, that you have hitherto maintained. Be honest, be industrious, and your example shall speed the sacred cause of freedom. Be assured, that in your ministers you will still find friends, who, while they point you to the Lamb of God as the only atonement for sin, will at the same time protect you from every wrong, as far as they are able. The advocates of oppression cannot stop the march of liberty. Onward, onward, is the watchword. The whole earth has caught the delightful sound, and the time is not far distant when the sun will not shine on a tyrant, or on a slave."

The reader will observe in this speech the idea of providing a refuge for labourers who might be expelled from the estate cottages, by purchasing land on which they might erect tenements for themselves. The idea was a felicitous one. It was an effectual remedy, and the only remedy, for the evil contemplated. It was also as magnificent as it was felicitous. It had respect not to a single case, or to a few, but to many thousands. It was a scheme for delivering a people from bondage. Its vastness might well have caused it to be deemed impracticable. Conceived, however, with so much sagacity and foresight, it gradually ripened into an active element. It was the germ of what subsequently became so notorious and so successful, under the name of the Free Village System. We shall hear much more of it presently.

Another machination of the planters it was necessary to meet. After emancipation, some of them constituted themselves into agricultural committees; they got up a number of documents professing to show the state of labour, and a report founded on these documents, and severely inculpating the baptist missionaries and their followers, was drawn up, published, and widely circulated. It was thought, no doubt, that this would be decisively influential with the proprietors, the majority of whom resided in England, and could know nothing but what was told them by their attorneys. Knibb, however, turned their own weapons against them. Fully satisfied that the returns on which this report was founded were at variance with the truth, and that the report itself was artfully framed for mischief, on the

2nd of March, 1839, he assembled the officers of the church under his care, and caused them to procure correct returns of the number of labourers at the various stations, distinguishing those who were at work. He published in a tabular form the information thus acquired, and prefixed to it the letter which I insert below:—

" *To the proprietors of sugar estates residing in England, and to the friends of freedom throughout the earth.*

" GENTLEMEN,—A committee of persons, generally the agents of the proprietors in the parish of Trelawney, have published (through the chairman, W. Dawson, Esq.) their views of the present state of agriculture in this parish, and wantonly charged the baptist missionaries, and the officers of their churches, with a combination to prevent the successful cultivation of sugar estates.

" Long have we remained silent under the most unfounded assertions which ever disgraced humanity, and which, we believe, are without a parallel in the history of civilized nations; but it appears to us now desirable to put forth a true statement of matters as far as we are concerned, that the misinformed absentee may see, that whatever be the cause why the servant he employs is not successful in the management of his property, the blame is most unjustly attributed to those who have ever been viewed with prejudice, on account of the opposition which the truth of the gospel they proclaim presents to the gratification of licentious and depraved habits.

" It is not for the officers of the baptist churches in Trelawney to state the true cause of the want of labour on some sugar estates. If the proprietors wish to learn the truth, they must come and see for themselves, when it is at least possible that causes may present themselves far other than the hackneyed and thread-bare story of 'partial governors,' 'time-serving magistrates,' and, 'the agents of the Baptist Missionary Society.'

" We do not, however, decline the task on account of our want of information respecting the recklessness with which some estates have been suffered to decline, the different modes by which the property of absentees has been squandered, or the gross insults offered to the labourers at the early stage of freedom, when they were anxious to work. A knowledge of human nature will, we think, lead all impartial individuals to the conclusion, that some of the present attorneys are not the best qualified to conduct advantageously the cultivation of the soil under the light of freedom, and that it will require a far greater change in their modes of action than it is possible for the length of time that has elapsed since the first breath of freedom gladdened our hearts to effect, ere they can be declared at all competent, either to conduct a system utterly opposed to the whole course of their existence, or to pronounce, with any degree of impartiality, upon its efficiency.

"The annexed table has been drawn up with great care, and we pledge ourselves to its general accuracy. Let our accusers disprove it, if they can. We know that they cannot. We feel persuaded that it is based upon truth. As injured men, we request from the proprietors a calm perusal of it; and we have little doubt but that the result will be as creditable to us, as it will be demonstrative of the disengenuous methods by which our enemies, and those of the proprietors of the soil, have endeavoured to injure our reputation.

"The committee have very unfairly stated the amount claimed for a day's labour, when they assert that 3*s.* 4*d.* currency has been offered and refused. Had they possessed the honesty which ought to guide the conduct of stewards, they would not have kept back the fact that this offer has been made for sixteen to eighteen hours' labour, and that its payment then depends upon the quantity of produce manufactured.

"From this tabular it appears that there are 1,703 men, 1,458 women, and 682 children at work, who are connected with the baptist congregations assembling at Falmouth, Refuge, and Waldensia. If the Trelawney committee can disprove this statement, let them.

"The name of every deacon and leader in the church is given, and we invite our accusers to name, if they can, those among us whom they have dared to traduce, as heading a combination inimical to the welfare of the land of our birth. If they refuse to accept the challenge, the amount of truth in the representations made by the committee will be easily ascertained by all reflecting persons.

"We assert, with a confidence inspired by the rectitude of our conduct, that our efforts as Christians, and as individuals possessed of influence on the estates where many of us reside, have been constantly employed for the promotion of industry and peace, and we cannot but believe, notwithstanding the clamour that is raised against us, that there are many who would, if they dared, bear testimony to the truth of our assertions; but experience has convinced us, that while the power is possessed of ruining any one who openly opposes the present colonial policy, we cannot expect this from those who are anxious to do us justice, but who are well aware that the expression of any sentiment in our favour would be the signal for a combined attack, to be pursued with a relentless cruelty which nothing but the ruin of its victim could satisfy."

Signed by the pastor, deacons, &c.

Referring to this document in a letter to Mr. Sturge, he says:—"You will have received ere this the bold report of the members of my church on the present state of labour in this parish. Contradicted it cannot be, as to its general correctness. I took every pains to have it complete, and I cannot but hope that it will do much good at home. In some cases those who signed it have been summarily dismissed; but the numbers we command prevents the planter from carrying out that which the papers urgently recommend, to dismiss the whole. Let them do it if they dare."

Knibb's interference in the wages' question was bitterly resented by the colonial party. Through the press, which was at their command, they heaped upon him the most unmeasured abuse. Because the peasantry would not work for the miserable pittance offered them, the planters raised the cry of ruin and rebellion, and laid the whole at the door of "King Knibb," "the monster," "the Dan O'Connell of Jamaica." But that, in truth, he was no enemy to the planters, was made manifest by the promptness and cheerfulness with which he always lent them his aid, when they were ready to act, as he thought, with fairness. Immediately after the first of August the labourers generally loitered about, not knowing what wages to ask, or what to take if offered; so that for some days scarcely any work was done. The proprietor of Oxford estate, in defiance of the sixpenny plot, offered one shilling sterling per day, and requested Knibb to use his influence with the labourers to accept of it. Knibb went to the estate, and had the happiness of effecting the first agreement to labour made after emancipation; and when some one went among them in order to make them dissatisfied, by telling them that their minister had made a bad bargain for them, he went over again, and said, "You have made the bargain, and if you do not keep it, I will never help you make another." In fact, he was incessantly using his influence to induce the peasantry to labour, while many of the planters themselves were trying to prevent it. Some would not give work, others would not pay for it when they had it. There were various motives for this. Some wished to drive the peasantry to a state of desperation by which they might profit, and others sought to reduce the value of estates in the market by exciting the fears of proprietors at home, in order that they might purchase to advantage; but amidst all this conflict of vicious elements, Knibb pursued an upright and benevolent course. The world has long since pronounced upon it the verdict which I now with pleasure record, when I affirm that, as Knibb was the chief instrument in Jamaica of obtaining emancipation, so he was its chief benefactor after liberty was won.

Not among the least convincing to others, or the least gratifying to himself, of the proofs that the course he pursued was entitled to the approbation of right-minded men, were the marks of kindness conferred upon him, in common with the baptist missionaries at large, by the noble-minded governor of Jamaica at that period, Sir Lionel Smith. He speaks in one of his letters of having called upon his excellency, in company with Messrs. Philippo and Clark, in February, 1839, when the whole were invited to dinner. The same courtesy was shown when Knibb, with Messrs. Burchell, Abbott, and Day, carried up an address on his excellency's leaving the island. Let courtesies of this class be deemed light as straws, they still show, as floating straws indicate the direction of the stream, the opinions of the personages by whom they are vouchsafed. They were in this case in strict unison with Sir Lionel's high estimate of the conduct of the baptist missionaries at large. In confirmation of this remark, I give one example of the manner in which his excellency was wont officially to express himself. In his reply to an address from the baptist missionaries, met in their annual association, in January, 1839, he said :—

> "I shall say but little to you in regard to the calumnies of which you complain.
>
> "Abuse is often honourable, and it has done great service to your cause; for you may be assured it has extended the knowledge of your exertions, which have gained you ample honour in every other country.
>
> "Had it not, and as long as I can give satisfaction to my country and my sovereign, I will gladly partake of that abuse, as a gratifying proof that we are fast destroying the last remnant of slavery throughout the world."

I now present to the reader some extracts from Knibb's correspondence with Mr. Sturge and Dr. Hoby, which was at this period frequent and copious, and which materially illustrates the progress of affairs.

TO MR. STURGE.

"*Wilberforce, June* 28, 1838.

"I am determined, that if the people are true to themselves, they shall not be oppressed, and I have told their employers so publicly. My plan is this (and, fearless of all consequences, I am determined to pursue it), that, if the masters will copy scales of wages, I will meet the people for the same purpose. I hope all my brethren will do the same."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, August* 17, 1838.

"If the attorneys, who (at least some of them) appear reckless of the proprietors' interest, had met the people fairly, every one would have been at work in the week following the first of August. The infamous lies printed in the papers are enough to shame the devil. Without the slightest foundation in truth, the papers weekly teem with the most alarming tidings. The consolation is, that they have cried 'wolf' so long that their ravings are unheeded. I have every hope that, assisted by our friends at home, the advocates of freedom will yet triumph, and the victims of oppression be free. Although we are now surrounded by bitterer foes than ever, I have little doubt but we shall finally succeed. If the lovely infant Freedom had but the cordial support of the ministers of the gospel which proclaims and leads to it, he would soon tower to the strength of manhood; but alas! alas! the blasting influence of the destroyed monster, together with the dreaded cry, 'Politics! Politics!' keeps some aloof, and induces others to side with those who, if they dared, would strangle the heaven-born child.

"A deep plot has been laid by many of the large attorneys to refuse a fair remuneration to the labouring population. As soon as I found it out I convened a public meeting; and I have every reason to believe that we shall succeed this time in defeating their plans. But similar attempts will continually be made. As soon as the people know how to use moral power these attempts will be futile; but this cannot be expected at present, and can only be induced by an extended system of education, the machinery for which is yet very defective, and lamentably deficient in quantity. Could this be much extended, and the power of the lordly attorneys lessened, Jamaica would bid fair to rise, and would exhibit one of the noblest triumphs that freedom ever won."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, November* 13, 1838.

"Government must take the work into its own hands, or equal and just laws we never shall have. I expect to call a public meeting of the unrepresented in this parish in a few days, to draw up a memorial to the people of England representing their political wrongs; and, if matters go on in this way much longer, I shall come home, and I will bring a bundle of facts which will make these persons tremble. A stand must be made, firm and unyielding. To change the nature of these oppressors is beyond our power; but to deprive them of the opportunity of doing harm is easy enough. If the government care one iota for the triumphant result of the bestowment of freedom, let them at once commence to act; if they do not, let the people of England demand protection, and the day is won. The friends of freedom need not be at all alarmed for my safety; the people have given such a demonstration of feeling, that the cowardly beings will not try that game again. Self-preservation will keep them quiet. Their rancour, however, is undiminished, and is exceeded only by the noble, firm, and valiant conduct of the people. They feel that they are free, and that the changes which are necessary can be obtained by constitutional means. We shall have a year or two of hard work, but we shall triumph. Woe to the man that dares to arrest the progress of liberty in Jamaica! Come it must in all its omnipotence, and in all the diffusiveness of its blessings. I feel confident that, by proper and consistent efforts, a few years will obtain for us laws by which the upright shall be protected in the enjoyment of his rights, and the unworthy punished for the evil that he doeth. But this must come from England. The pandemonium at Spanish Town, called the House of Assembly, have neither the will nor the sense to bring about so desirable a change. Most of them are wedded to oppression. They cannot breathe any other air. When grapes grow on brambles, then may the people of England expect that the Jamaica slave-tyrants will frame laws for the protection of that liberty which has destroyed all their long-cherished hopes. To entrust any longer the cause of the poor people to them, will be an infatuation unequalled in the annals of political expediency. If peace is to be the portion of Jamaica, they must be deprived of their power. They are a striking exemplification of the truth of the remark, that it requires but a small portion of sense to do a great deal of mischief. The smallest portion ever given to a legislative body is employed by them with a pertinacity worthy of a better cause."

The obstruction to the success of their measures presented by the attitude and conduct of the baptists, led many of the planters to fall with peculiar resentment upon that body. They thought that if they could break the spirit of these men, they could manage more easily with the rest. "In many places," says Knibb, "they have refused them work, and I know that a deep plot is laid to deprive them of all means of support, by ejecting them from the estates. Already have some commenced pulling down the people's houses, destroying their provision grounds, and dispossessing them of their little all." To relieve this emergency he saw the adaptation of the Free Village system, the felicitous conception of which he had already formed; and the reader will soon find reason to admire the energy and ardour with which he carried it into execution.

"I am determined to procure land if possible," says he to Mr. Sturge, on the 13th of November: "but in Trelawney we are sadly cramped, there being none to sell that is at all eligible. However, I am on the watch." In a fortnight his watchfulness was rewarded, and on the 29th he thus wrote to Dr. Hoby: —

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Falmouth, November* 29, 1838.

"Last night I had offered me, in a lovely spot, 500 acres of land, with a good house thereon, just where we need it, for £1000 sterling. I shall buy it to-day, and I earnestly beg you to procure me the loan of £500 or £600, for twelve months. Do take this to Mr. Sturge, and I am sure he will assist. I will pay interest, and I am confident that I can return the principal within the time I mention. The land is excellent. It is in the mountains, in my cousin Dexter's district; and he will at once commence preaching the gospel, and open a school. God has raised up a young man of deep piety from Bath, who has offered his services for this neighbourhood, and has been accepted. My plan is to convey the house and a few acres of land to the mission, and to resell the whole of the rest to the members of the church of Christ who may be oppressed, or who may wish to purchase. It shall be sold in lots of one, two, or three acres, so that on the erection of a house the occupier may have a vote at the elections. I am obliged to purchase through a merchant, as I fully believe that on no consideration should I obtain it, if my purpose was known.

"I do hope that, if you can, you will assist me in forming a free village at this place, so that should any of our members, as I know they will, be the victims of treachery, scorn, and trickery, they may have a home. The inveterate enemies of the blacks will find that a few such purchases will afford them an asylum, so that a peasant, with a little freehold, may defy their scorn, and go to any estate he pleases to work, and return to his home and family when he has fulfilled as an hireling his day's employ. While the landowners have all the land, they can, and they will, and they do, daily oppress the people, by demanding abominably high rents for their houses. In many cases, though the house is no better than a hog-sty, I have seen demands of eight shillings and fourpence per week rent, and at the same time only one shilling and eightpence per day for wages, so that a man must work five days to pay for his house and grounds. Even this does not satisfy some of them, but they try to make the man pay rent, the wife pay rent, and each of the children pay rent; and I have seen, and if I come home I will produce, the papers where a baptist has been charged at the rate of £150 per annum for his house and grounds, the outside value of which, if sold, was not £40."

Writing to Mr. Sturge on the following day, he informs him of the actual purchase of the land, and calls the intended village Birmingham. He then proceeds as follows: —

TO MR. STURGE.

"*Falmouth, November* 30, 1838.

"I have every reason for believing that there will in a few months be land enough to sell, (and cheap too,) fully to stop the spirit of persecution, but the terms will be cash; and unless we can borrow some, we shall not be able to avail ourselves of the opportunities thrown in our way. I do hope that some kind friends will be induced now to assist by loans; gifts we do not need, as the people can purchase from us. In many cases, if it were known who was the purchaser, and for what purpose, no sale would be made. I shall, if possible, purchase the first estate near me for a town. The possession of 2000 acres would teach these oppressors of men that we were beyond their power. From this town the people could go to work on the surrounding properties. Belmont would do well for this, and I am assured that there will be others for sale. We would line out streets with gardens, and the back lands would do for provisions and grass for the cattle. I do hope that my little Birmingham will never be cursed with a church establishment, or a monopoly; but that I shall live to see civil and religious liberty shedding on it all their lovely influences."

In an application for aid towards this purchase he thus addresses Mr. Dyer, at the same date:—

TO MR. DYER.

"I feel confident that the committee will oblige me, when I inform them that I have sold all my furniture, or nearly so, to the station, and have advanced full £300, which I have borrowed, to help my brethren whose people were shamefully ill-treated. They are fast paying me back, and I should not thus have troubled you, had not two or three attorneys begun the same game with me. It so happened, that adjoining Piedmont a beautiful place offered, in the immediate vicinity of those estates where the ejectment system commenced, the attorney telling the people that they were turned off because they were baptists. I knew that the parties would not sell to me, so I got a merchant who is friendly to purchase, and he has made it over to me. I have possession, and by the time the title can return from England, so that I can give the people possession, I shall have all the money. I will cheerfully pay any interest, and request you to charge it; let me know what it amounts to, and it shall be met, as the people can, and will, cheerfully do it. The peculiar circumstances in which we are placed is my apology for this trouble. Could I have allowed my poor fellow Christians belonging to my brethren's churches to suffer, I need not have made this application; but I could not, my heart often bled for them, and I rejoice that I can in the least assist them."

The successful agitation of the rent and wages question, together with the triumphant aspect of the free village system—for the planters saw that they were beaten—engendered at this period extreme bitterness towards the baptist missionaries. But Knibb did not quail before it. The fury of the storm did not even make him bend, like the willow; he braved it with the sturdiness of the oak. "The feeling against us," says he to Mr. Sturge, "is now fully as bad as it was in 1832; while at present almost every one is against us. If the present agents in Jamaica can embitter liberty to the much-despised baptists, they assuredly will. But this is not the time to relax our efforts. Should we do so, the people would be quite disheartened." And to Dr. Hoby he wrote thus:—"If the government are not exceedingly careful, ruin will result here. The advocates of oppression will become more violent. The year 1832 did not witness displays of more hostile feeling. The cowards, however, dare not act, except in the darkness of midnight."

The last phrase in this extract refers to an incident characteristic enough of the pitiful malignity of the party. On the night of the 28th of November, some "miscreants," having broken the fence, entered Knibb's premises, and destroyed the tree he had planted on the 1st of August. He met this small insult with his usual spirit. He immediately placarded the town with a handbill, offering fifty dollars reward for information which would lead to the conviction of the offenders, and announcing his intention to plant another tree. In the meanwhile, he had a pole erected on the spot, and a flag hoisted on it, with the words, *Libertas resurgat.* "If they think they are going to frighten us," says he, "they are miserably mistaken."

"The year 1839 was ushered in at Falmouth, by a very numerous and important meeting, held at the baptist chapel, into which several hundred persons were unable to gain admittance, on Tuesday, the 1st of January. Of the speeches delivered at this meeting I have no account, but the resolutions passed at it, which are numerous and somewhat long, are before me. They constitute a part of Knibb's avowed and deliberate scheme for the employment of "moral power," and an enumeration of the topics introduced will show that they were well adapted to their end. The first resolution asserts that the parties are "devotedly attached to the British government, and to the person of her most gracious majesty, Queen Victoria;" the second complains of the restriction of the elective franchise, and implores its extension; and the third declares, "the most cordial thanks of the meeting to be justly due to the British government." The gist of the series, however, lies mainly in the fourth resolution, which conveys thanks to the governor, Sir Lionel Smith. The praiseworthy course which this admirable officer had pursued had brought upon him the intense hatred of the colonial party, who did everything they could to destroy his reputation with the home government, and to render the administration of the island impracticable in his hands. The resolution proposed at this meeting was intended to aid in counteracting these machinations, both by assuring Sir Lionel himself that his efforts for the welfare of the emancipated classes were duly appreciated by them, and by demonstrating to the government that the clique who had the ear of the colonial office did not represent the sentiments of the community. I give this resolution entire:—

"That our most hearty and sincere thanks be given to our noble and firm governor, Sir Lionel Smith, for the stand he has made against the advocates of oppression, and his determination to afford us the protection of law; and that we pledge ourselves to his excellency, and to the British crown, to manifest our gratitude by our obedience to the laws, and by a continuance in that conduct which, despite of every effort to injure or malign us, has won for us the approbation of those who sway the political destinies of the British empire."

A deputation, consisting of four of the emancipated class, was appointed to convey this resolution to the governor.*

Another of the resolutions adopted at this meeting had reference to the rooting up of the tree of commemoration. It ran thus:—

"That, as the lovers of slavery, and the haters of our race, have destroyed the tree which we planted in commemoration of the glorious day which made us men, a monument be erected in this chapel to perpetuate this delightful event; so that our children and our children's children, while they worship the God of their fathers, may, with gratitude and love, view the memento of the temporal freedom which it pleased the Eternal to bestow on their ancestors."

The original intention of planting another tree was thus exchanged for a plan at once more secure and more expressive. In conveying to Mr. Sturge the request of the meeting that he would kindly procure some neat plan for a monument, Knibb says—"On an ordinary occasion I should not desire this; but I think this great event ought to be commemorated in every way calculated to perpetuate the liveliest gratitude to God for his abundant mercies." A tablet was subsequently prepared, and erected; and as the reader may like to have some idea of it, I take the following description of it from the *Baptist Herald:* —

---

* Sir Lionel Smith left Jamaica on the 1st of October, in this year, amidst demonstrations of popular regard altogether without a parallel in the history of Jamaica. In his answer to the address of the baptist missionaries on this occasion, he made some allusion to threats of assassination, a reference which created no small stir in the colony. "Poor innocent creatures!" says Knibb, writing to Mr. Middleditch, "they are exceedingly anxious to establish their characters, which really need a great deal of propping." Writing to Mr. Sturge on the 2nd of October, he further says—"Our good old governor sailed yesterday, and I do hope that a hearty welcome awaits him at home. Richly does he merit all the esteem which the friends of the oppressed can show to him. His name will long be associated with the liberties of Jamaica. He has promised us his likeness, and we intend to have medals struck in silver, in bronze, and in metal, surrounded by his memorable answer to the government, in reply to the accusations of the planters that he wished the females not to work,—'I preferred the dictates of humanity to the policy of short-sighted planters.' I made the request for this when we presented our address, and he very promptly replied, 'Mr. Knibb, you shall have it.'"

"It is surmounted with the figure of Justice, holding in her left hand the balances of equity whilst her right hand rests upon the sword which is placed at her side. Beneath this figure the likenesses of Granville Sharp, Sturge, and Wilberforce, are arranged in bas-relief, and that of the Rev. W. Knibb appears at the base. It bears the following inscription :—

DEO GLORIA!

Erected
BY EMANCIPATED SONS OF AFRICA,
TO COMMEMORATE
THE BIRTH-DAY OF THEIR FREEDOM,
AUGUST THE FIRST, 1838.
HOPE
HAILS THE ABOLITION OF SLAVERY
THROUGHOUT THE BRITISH COLONIES,
AS THE DAY-SPRING OF
UNIVERSAL LIBERTY
TO ALL NATIONS OF MEN, WHOM
GOD "HATH MADE OF ONE BLOOD."
"Ethiopia shall soon stretch out her hands unto God."—Psalm lxviii. 31.

Immediately under this inscription, two Africans are represented in the act of burying the broken chain and useless whip; another is rejoicing in the undisturbed possession of the book of God; whilst, associated with these, a fond mother is joyously caressing the infant which, for the first time, she can dare to call her own."

To return to the public meeting—for I have not quite done with it—two other resolutions were passed; one for the formation of a Falmouth Auxiliary Anti-

Slavery Society, and a second objurgatory of slavery in the United States. Writing to Mr. Sturge three days afterwards, Knibb says, "A more interesting meeting I have never attended. These demonstrations of moral power tell with the omnipotence of truth upon the cause of freedom. The calm determination neither to do wrong nor to suffer wrong is manifesting itself every day, and I have not the smallest doubt that eventually we shall succeed."

From the Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society now formed he had the pleasure of speedily remitting the sum of £100 ("all of which," says he, "came from blackey") to the parent society, and several other donations have followed.

Throughout the year 1839 the contest between the planters and the peasantry raged with great violence in Jamaica, and Knibb maintained his position with a courage and success truly worthy of admiration. The following extracts from his correspondence with Mr. Sturge will give the reader a general view of affairs:—

TO MR. STURGE.

"*Falmouth, January* 4, 1839.

"You will be delighted to learn that our little Birmingham is already a refuge for the destitute. About seventy families are preparing to erect houses, having already purchased land. A school-house is commenced, and the preaching of the gospel will be regularly maintained. Near this spot the advocates of oppression first commenced the rent controversy, and I am truly thankful that they have been thus defeated. This week I have two hundred and thirty acres of fine mountain land offered me, at £3 an acre. I intend to go and see it, and should it prove as eligible as I think it is, I shall purchase it at once. I know that close to it ejectments are immediately to be served, and, if I can, I will provide for the coming evil. Two or three bold attempts of this kind will teach our foes what they have to expect, and I feel confident that in this I shall be supported by every true friend to the houseless negro.

If a few sugar estates are abandoned so much the better, eventually it will be the making of Jamaica. Sugar is sweet, but the liberty of man is much more sweet."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, May* 25, 1839.

"As it was perfectly natural to expect, the daily annoyances insults, and injustice, which the people receive on many estates, together with the taunts and jeers with which they are continually saluted as baptists, are producing a longing for a home; and a home of their own they will, if possible, obtain. The infatuation of many of the attorneys is beyond belief. Do without these people they cannot, and yet they resort to every paltry annoyance, as if to make them disgusted with the cultivation of the soil. As the proprietors at home have joined them, richly do they merit that punishment which, in the loss of their best men, they will be sure to receive. The fault rests entirely with them. I aver, with the consciousness of truth, that never in the history of man has a finer display of forgiveness been shown, a determination, if possible, to forget past injuries, and to work for a fair remuneration, than has been shown by the insulted negroes in Jamaica; and I equally aver, that in no instance has a more dogged resistance to wise measures, a more obstinate determination to ruin, if possible, the fair prospects which appeared on every hand, been manifested than by the whole slave tyrants, whose pestilential influence blasts everything that is good. If these men had had to deal with any other race than the ever-forgiving African, there would not have been an estate in cultivation in the island. They have tried immigrants from almost every part of the world, who have either died under their cruelty, or fled from them in despair; nor is there, I believe, a single sugar estate cultivated without poor blackey, notwithstanding all the thousands expended on immigration throughout the colony. I cannot advise the people to remain on the properties. Hitherto I have done so, and have used every effort to induce continuous labour; and what have I and my poor people received?—taunts as foul as the odour of the bottomless-pit, and persecutions restrained from blood only by the omnipotence of the Deity. As the proprietors at home have joined the tyrants here, let them get the people to work if they can. I know they cannot; and if we wish it, we have, by withdrawing our influence on their behalf, the most ample means of teaching them that, in traducing us, their folly is equal to their ignorance."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, August* 9, 1839.

"The most determined efforts are now making to crush the peasantry. On some estates in this parish five shillings rent is demanded, and six shillings and eightpence wages offered for four days' labour, so that a man will have one shilling and eightpence currency as the week's result. Others are charging every inmate rent. As is natural, work there is none, and the very time when the planter should be alert he is allowing to pass away. They will not succeed. The people will be free; and, as will serve the absentee right, he will, if he permits these things, be ruined. Numbers are purchasing land wherever it can be obtained, and others, more wise, are only waiting till some estate is for sale, when we shall, if possible, purchase. The falling off of the crops in this parish is not at all the fault of the people. It is entirely that of the master. He alone is to blame, and ought alone to bear it. My wonder is that they make any sugar at all. The seasons, it is true, have not been good; but such attempts at cheating and foul-dealing would have totally disgusted any other peasantry in the world. Amidst all this strife, O how pleasing it is to know that the Lord reigneth, and that his dominion must advance!"

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, November* 30, 1839.

"Since I commenced this letter, a poor old woman, a member of my church, named Rosey Shaw, from Shawfield, who has lived there from her infancy, has come to me, saying that, without any warning, her master had that morning ordered her house to be pulled down, which was done, and she driven into the road, without a shelter or a home. In other cases exorbitant rents are demanded from each member of the family, and, when not paid, the house is forcibly entered, the persons ejected, and their little all destroyed. We have a trying time coming, but I hope that God will enable the people to stand firm, and us to act with that firmness and prudence which the crisis demands. If ever I heartily detested oppression it is now, when I behold legislators employing its fangs to deprive of a home old and infirm women, whose toil has rendered them unfit any more to labour. In many cases, if a son or a daughter takes in the old father or mother, they are served with notice to quit. Nothing but a large share of patience keeps me quiet; but act we must, or slavery again will be rampant."

TO THE SAME.

"*Refuge, September* 14, 1839.

"I am happy to inform you that I have succeeded in obtaining two tracts of land, which have been resold to the people, and on which some who were summarily ejected are already located. One of these places has been purchased and paid for entirely by the members of my church from one estate. They were treated with injustice and scorn, and they left, and have found a home of their own, where the petty tyranny of the proud attorney cannot reach them. The other place is near to Waldensia, and I think of calling it Hoby Town, after my good friend Dr. Hoby. I have already hired out more than seventy lots for buildings and gardens, and the whole will be taken and paid for as fast as it can be measured.

"If any of the estates are ruined, the owners will richly deserve it, and their waste lands will do well to form new towns or villages, where food may be grown for the inhabitants instead of sugar for pampered absentees, a much-needed change I assure you. Jamaica will never be truly prosperous or happy, while she is entirely dependent upon a foreign market for nearly all the necessaries of life. Ireland would be quite as happy if her inhabitants ate half the exports. Jamaica will be much improved when the necessaries of life are more plentifully grown, even though a few tons of sugar less leave her shores.

"When I reflect on the fifteen years that are past, and connect the amazing, the glorious change, with the feebleness of the agency employed, I distinctly recognize the hand of God. He alone who hath, could have performed it. Let the enemies of God and of man, the despots of the earth who measure human good by the weight of their purses, or the subserviency of men's minds to their will, say as they please, the results of freedom are of the most gratifying description. They far outweigh the most sanguine expectations of the most ardent friends of man. It is a glorious triumph of Christianity. The insulted African has, by his calm propriety of conduct, fully vindicated his claim to be a man, and by his noble behaviour he has falsified all his dastardly accusers. It may be that a few less pounds of sugar are made, (and who can expect a free man to work as incessantly as a poor slave was obliged?) but what matters this? It is but the small dust of the balance. We have the germ of a noble free peasantry, and I assure you that to assist them in the attainment of their civil and religious liberties, is to me a source of pleasure only surpassed by the proclaiming of that mercy by which they are freed for ever. The tyrants may hiss, but oppress they shall not; and if the owners of the soil at home will still aid them let that ruin which they seek be their reward. I never did, I never shall, measure the results of freedom by the thousands of pounds that find their way to the pocket of the rich absentee; but by the cottager's comfortable home, by the wife's proper release from toil, by the instructed child, and by all that joy and peace which now gladdens the hearts of the beloved people of my choice."

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, November* 26, 1839.

"I have done what I could to free the poor from oppression, and to expose the tyranny of these oppressors, while I have succeeded in getting the people to work wherever my influence could be exerted; and I am quite willing to be judged by the results, being fully convinced that, in those parishes where 'the infernal baptists' are most numerous, there will be more sugar made, and at a cheaper rate, than in the other parts of the island. I have to stand nearly alone; but, on looking back upon the struggle since the 1st of August, I do not regret one single step I have taken. I have a conscience void of offence in this matter, and, however I may, and do, regret that my actions give me an unenviable notoriety, I am determined, by the help of my Heavenly Father to grapple with tyranny, both civil and ecclesiastical, and to defend my beloved people from the attempts continually made to re-enslave them."

Although Knibb's public bearing in this great controversy was characterized by a uniform and unflinching boldness, it cannot be supposed that he was without many moments of private sadness and depression. In some measure his correspondence indicates this, although much less frequently than might have been expected. I quote, however, a few lines of a letter to

Mr. Sturge, in which the secret is just permitted to transpire. "The fact is," says he, "that I am often perplexed out of measure, and really I know not at times what to do. But He who has hitherto, will still, I trust, preserve me. Had I not a kind and affectionate people I should sink; but I have, and they are endeared to my soul."

The 1st of August, 1839, the first anniversary of freedom, was celebrated with enthusiasm at Falmouth. After a prayer-meeting at six o'clock, and an examination of the schools at nine, a meeting of the Falmouth Auxiliary Anti-Slavery Society was held at one o'clock. I give *in extenso* Knibb's speech at this meeting, not only on account of its historical value, but more especially because it exhibits him as he was at home, at once in the bosom of his friends, and in the midst of his enemies. He spoke as follows:—

"Mr. Chairman, and my Christian friends,—There are very few ministers who can preach without a text, and I am glad you have given me one. I did not make this resolution, but I am glad it has been made; and before I proceed to speak about it, I shall read it. It is as follows:—

"'That this meeting repels with indignation, the false and atrocious accusations made, during the first year of freedom, against the labouring population, by the slave-tyrants of Jamaica, and dares the enemies of the negro race, to substantiate even one of those foul slanders which they are continually heaping upon it.'

"Mr. Chairman, I am prepared to support this resolution, and I dare our enemies to substantiate any one of the numerous charges they have made. We have arrived at such a state of society that we must combine energy with calmness. An opinion prevails that I am a violent man, and that I take hold of every straw that floats upon the stream of time, in order to keep alive agitation. The whole truth is, I have come to the conclusion, after fifteen years' calm reflection, that slavery is entirely destructive of every social interest. It is destructive of the temporal—it is destructive of the spiritual—and it is destructive of the intellectual interest of man.

It is from a firm conviction of this that I have done whatever I have done for you; and, as I have done all that lay in my power to secure to you freedom, I hope you will have energy enough to keep it. ('Yes, yes.')

"I dare say some burlesque will be made at our having a black man in the chair to-day, on account of his want of education, though he can both read and write; but the charge of ignorance among the emancipated peasantry, comes with a bad grace from those who were the causers of that ignorance, and whose forefathers, a few centuries ago, were equally unlettered. But it is not education alone (though none can prize it more than I do) that qualifies a man to fill the chair at a public meeting like this. If education does not do more for the black man than it has done for the white men of this country (at least for four out of every five of them), it will prove a curse rather than a blessing. The same God that made the white made the black man. The same blood that runs in the white man's veins, flows in yours. It is not the complexion of the skin, but the complexion of character that makes the great difference between one man and another. But to the resolution.

"One charge brought against you is this. Your enemies say the baptists won't work. ('It's false.') If the baptists never work, who helps to make all the sugar that is made? ('The baptists.') Who helps to make all the rum? ('The baptists.') Yet the baptists never work! ('Tis a lie.') If the baptists never work, I should like to know where you got those fine bonnets and coats from, so many of which I see here. Did you steal them? ('No, no, no.') Did you buy them? ('Yes.') And pay for them? ('Yes.') And with your own money, which you worked for? ('Yes.') But Mr. Dyer says you don't work! ('He is a liar.') Well, I don't understand how you manage to get on so well, unless you work for it, and work hard too. Indeed, I will defy the world to produce a more respectably dressed peasantry than fills this chapel at this moment; and, out of the good, staunch anti-slavery men and women within these walls, I fearlessly assert there is not one who either stole the clothing he wears, or who has not paid by his own industry the merchant of whom he purchased it.

"But who is this modern Solon, who is for ever traducing the honest and industrious labourer? What are the qualifications he possesses, who in this town sends out his weekly bulletin of the state of public morals? The immaculate William Dyer! On his noble structure nature has exhausted her energies, while his mind, fraught with every lofty sentiment, has ever disdained the least semblance of falsehood or detraction. Whether we view his private character, or his public acts, we are lost in admiration. Purity sits enthroned upon his majestic brow, and vice recedes as she witnesses his magnanimous career. Talk not to me of Demosthenes! Speak not of the noble-minded Milton! Let all the mighty spirits of by-gone days retire! Where worth is respected, where manly courage is revered, there let William Dyer's name be as a talisman, a name which youth shall respect, and age itself revere! What man dares even whisper that such a person could err, or that malice could rankle in his breast? What, Mr. Dyer say that which is not true? Impossible! Mr. Dyer never told a falsehood. And yet Mr. Dyer said that Richard Williams, who committed the robbery at Sievwright's, was a baptist. ('Tis false.') Mr. Dyer said I would even receive stolen money. ('He lies.') But Mr. Dyer says so in his paper; and his is really a choice paper; the articles in it are as refreshing to me as so many mouthfuls of ice-cream. I have one of his papers here now, and I'll tell you what he published only yesterday. Here it is—pray listen to it. 'Knibb, formerly a baker in Devizes, and Oughton, a decayed upholsterer, appear to be the leading men of this mischievous sect, and now keep their carriages, and live in great splendour in Jamaica. Upon two occasions Knibb brought ten thousand men into a small town, to the great alarm of the inhabitants, without the governor interfering or checking his audacity.' Now to think of printing this in the very town where every one knows it is false! Yet Mr. Dyer is a good man, an honourable man, a truth-telling man, a respectable man; and let him gainsay it who dares.

"Your enemies say you won't pay rent for your houses. But let us see what is the rent they wish to charge. Why, they charge the husband, the wife, and every one of the children in a family, rent for a miserable hut and patch of land. I should be happy if you could enter into arrangements at once to pay a fair rent for your houses and grounds, but I must say that if you pay the rent they wish to charge, you will be fools. If the attorneys will come forward in a spirit of fairness, I will recommend you to pay rent at once. But if John Jackson, and Mary Jackson, and Wilberforce Jackson, and Buxton Jackson, and Sir Lionel Smith Jackson, and all the rest of the little Jacksons, are each to be charged rent for a house and an acre of land, they would be great fools indeed to pay it. I say let the planters know you are freemen, and that you wish to be treated as freemen. ('Yes.') I should say you ought not to engage to rent your houses for a short time; but quarterly, or yearly. You may pay the rent weekly, or monthly, or quarterly, for short accounts are best. You must not suffer yourselves to be taken in by any arrangement which you do not fully understand. Ask advice, and I am sure you will get it. If the planters acted properly, I am sure there would be no necessity for me to say one word about it; but the fact is, they do not wish to act properly. There are some honourable men, I know, among them, who will act fairly; but it is my firm conviction that there are attorneys in Jamaica who would bring you back again to slavery if they could. ('Yes, yes.') And are we always to be persecuted thus, and are we never to speak? They say everything they like against us, and are we never to stand on our own defence? The senior magistrate of this parish went last week to the commanding officer at the garrison, and insulted the whole population by asking him to prepare the troops to turn out against us, because there was to be a rebellion. ('Oh, oh!') And are we never to be allowed to speak? And if I don't stand up to defend you, who in Falmouth will do it for you? ('None.') Well, then, since we have no protection to expect from them, we must combine our energies constitutionally to protect ourselves.

"There are infamous laws existing in the island, which we must try to get abolished. One of them has been alluded to in the House of Commons, by the under-secretary for the colonies. It is to this effect:—'All rogues, vagabonds, or other idle persons, found wandering from place to place or otherwise disorderly, may be apprehended by the constable, and taken before a magistrate, who is empowered to order him or her to be whipped on the naked back, not exceeding thirty-nine lashes.' Suppose a person like one whom I could name, who is so well known for the tender mercies he possesses, were to see my deacon, Mr. Brown, or his wife, upon his property, some day just after he had had his dinner, and should order his constable to take hold of them as idle vagabonds, and lay them down, and give them each thirty-nine lashes, would that be right? ('No.') Is that the way freemen are to be treated? ('No, no.') No, my friends, it is not; and I will never rest till this law is repealed. This act makes it lawful to send any coloured person who comes within the act to the workhouse, to be set to work for any time not exceeding six months; but all white persons committed for the same offences are to be fed, lodged, and worked, separate and apart from the free negroes, mulattoes, and slaves. This law makes the distinction of complexion the rule for the measure of punishment. The white man, or the white female, who is taken up as a vagrant, is to be fed, lodged, and accommodated with comparative comfort; but the black man, or the black female, is to be subjected to the withering influence of cruelty, and to all the agonies that may be inflicted by the cart-whip. This law was never made for freemen; it was made for slaves. Send it to Cuba, send it to America, or anywhere else you please; but it won't do for Jamaica! What is good for the black man is good for the white man. My opinion is, that every law which makes any reference to colour at all ought instantly to be repealed. But if they are so fond of flogging, let the white man try it, and let one of my drivers lay it on; and then let him say whether it is just and proper. You will perhaps ask, how does it happen that this law is not enforced? I will tell you. It is not from any leniency on their part, but from the prudence and foresight of our esteemed governor, Sir Lionel Smith. I have it from good authority, that Sir Lionel Smith said he would dismiss the very first magistrate that made use of this terrible engine to oppress the people.

"Your enemies say there is no sugar made this year. Then I should like to know what were those ships loaded with that have sailed out of the harbour during the last two months? ('Sweet sand, sweet sand,' accompanied by roars of laughter.) I am informed that there will not be a sufficient number of ships to carry home the sugar that has been cultivated; if so, what becomes of all their loud complaints? The planters raised a hue and cry about the estates being all turned into ruinate. I should like to know how it is that there are no estates to sell? I want to buy a fine estate: do you know any ruinate estate for sale? ('No, no.') Well, then, let them say on. I defy them all to substantiate one single charge which they have made against the baptists. I tell them, fearlessly, that there is not a more peaceful, cleanly, orderly, and industrious people on the earth: and I challenge them to prove the contrary. It is not in this chapel alone I would face them. Let them have a public meeting at the court-house, and let them have their say and let me have mine; I pledge myself to prove every assertion I have made, and defy the whole of the calumniators of the baptist church to prove a single charge they have made against us. O that they would come forward in their own proper persons, and not under the assumed garb of 'Spectators,' and 'Natives,' and I know not what. Never was there a single soul of them who came forward to contradict our statements but one, who suddenly *jumped* into the matter, and as quickly *jumped* out again. (This reference to Mr. Jump occasioned great laughter.) They, perhaps, think themselves so important, and ourselves so unworthy of notice, that they will not stoop to answer us; then, upon their principles, I should like to know why they do take so much notice of us? There is not a paper in the island but what teems with my name. If you look over any of them, you will find a few thousand Knibbs. And you will find that Knibb is dubbed a pope, a Mahomet, an agitator, a Dan O'Connell, and I know not what. If we are so insignificant, why do they then notice us? Why do they not let us alone? I'll tell you why it is. They know that we have power, both here and at home. I am not afraid to tell them all my mind. They shall not taunt me, and say that I said in England what I dare not say here. I met the advocates of slavery in England. I met and faced their great champion, Mr. Peter Borthwick; and now I am here, I am not afraid to say here what I said in England. Where are my enemies? Let me see them: let them come forward. Why don't they do this? Because they are afraid.

"I cannot conclude without congratulating this meeting on the first anniversary of their freedom. I wish you joy, and I hail you happy in the enjoyment of this great blessing. When I reflect upon the circumstance that 300,000 human beings have been set free in this island, and that not one has ever raised his hand to strike a white man, I cannot but rejoice that the moral influence of religion has been so manifest. Do not, my dear friends, ever allow yourselves to be betrayed into any acts of violence. Continue to act consistently and honestly, according to the word of God. If you want advice under any circumstances, ask it, and depend upon it you will get it. Under the present circumstances in which you are placed by the law to which I have alluded, you may depend upon it that the lion of Great Britain has only to lay his paw upon this iniquitous law, and it shall be annihilated at once. All that we want is equal justice, the same justice for the black that there is for the white man. I here pledge myself that I will not rest till you are placed upon the same footing as I am. I will not be satisfied till your wives are placed upon the same footing as my wife. If I were a black man, I should not be ashamed of the colour of my skin. There is no disgrace in being black. I did not make myself white. God made me as I am, and he made you as you are. My friends, I again hail you free, and wish you joy on this anniversary of your freedom. I rejoice that you have not only borne calumny and reproach with a Christian spirit, but that you have learnt to forgive your enemies. Now, then, three cheers for the queen."

It is impossible, I think, for any one to read this speech without surprise and admiration. The loftiness of generous and noble feeling, the irresistible common sense and power of argument, the biting sarcasm, and the crushing defiance which distinguish it, justify me in calling it a most felicitous effort of genuine eloquence; while its marvellous adaptation to the character of the auditory, and to the momentary attitude of the great controversy then in progress, are beyond all praise.

Throughout the whole period of which I am writing the pro-slavery portion of the Jamaica press was assailing Knibb in vituperative and calumnious articles. Generally speaking, he suffered these to go unnoticed; but there was one which he thought it his duty, both to himself and his church, to submit to the test of a legal investigation. In the *Cornwall Courier* of the 25th of July, 1838, just a week before the ushering in of freedom, were several articles which, put together, amounted to an imputation that Knibb's followers were in the habit of stealing money in order to supply his demands, and that he was not unwilling to receive it knowing it to be stolen. For the insertion of these articles he filed a criminal information against Mr. Dyer, the editor of the paper in question, the trial arising out of which, however, did not come on till July in the following year.

In the beginning of 1839 another attack was made upon him, and in a different mode. On the morning of the 23rd of February, the town of Falmouth was found to have been placarded during the night with large bills, purporting to give an account of Knibb's early life, as deposed on oath by one Thomas Jones. That the reader may know to what base expedients his adversaries in Jamaica could have recourse, I insert the principal part of Jones's affidavit below.

"William Knibb, the baptist parson, was apprenticed to a baker named Blackwell, at Devizes, in Wiltshire. He ran away from his master, and was not heard of until he was driving a stage-coach between Bradford and Frome, in Somersetshire, where I was born. Knibb was at that time a member of the baptists, having turned religious; he, however, was discharged by his employers, for having upset the coach when intoxicated. He was then turned out of the baptist society, and left Bradford, and went to Bristol. He there behaved so badly that his friends discarded him. The next time we heard of him he was in Jamaica. After the rebellion here Knibb returned to Frome, and lodged at my father's house. I was then at home. He went about the different villages near Frome, to make collections for repairing the baptist chapels in Jamaica. One day Knibb borrowed my father's black mare, to go, as he said, to Chapmanslade, which is about three miles from Frome; he came home with his cheek cut, and tied up with a handkerchief; he said the mare had taken fright at a woman on the road, and had thrown him off. The next day, however, a farmer named Goodwin came to my father's house, and said that, the day before, Knibb had come into his house in a shower of rain, that he had given the horse oats, and Knibb some bread and cheese and cider; that he went into the cellar to draw a second, and that when he came back he missed a jowl of bacon; but not being sure that Knibb was the thief, he did not like to accuse him of having stolen it. After the rain had ceased, Knibb was in the act of mounting the mare, when the nose of the jowl of bacon stuck out of the pocket of his great coat; that he (Goodwin) laid hold of it, telling Knibb the next time he stole from him to steal a ham, not a jowl. And now, then, let us have cheek to cheek; and, suiting the action to the word, he struck Knibb on the cheek with the jowl of bacon, and cut his face."

Thomas Jones was ascertained to be a needy sailor who had lately arrived in the island, and on being interrogated, he said that he had tendered this deposition at the request of others, and that he expected to receive money for his share in the transaction; while the parties instigating this malignant attack, and suborning the perjury by which it was apparently sustained, turned out to be no other than the editors of the *Jamaica Despatch*, the principal organ of the planter interest. It might seem that so pure and transparent a fiction could not have produced, in any community, a serious effect, and that Knibb's most dignified course, and a perfectly safe one, would have been to pass by the intended insult as a piece of impertinence beneath his notice. The envenomed missile, however, was far from being so harmless as it might have been thought to be. The affidavit was immediately printed with glee in nearly all the papers in the island, and was even copied as "an authentic narrative" into an English paper, the *John Bull.* His jealous regard for the purity of his moral character,* against which this attack was evidently directed, caused him to feel acutely under it, and led him to determine on prosecuting the offending parties. Legal proceedings were promptly commenced. At the assizes held at Kingston, an indictment was preferred against the editors of the *Despatch*, but the grand jury, upon principles now too well known to the reader to need further exposition, threw out the bill.

On the 24th of April Knibb laid the whole matter before the committee, and claimed their protection in the following terms: —

---

* He was habitually sensitive to attacks on his moral character. On one occasion, hearing that a person had brought against him a specific charge of immorality in the House of Assembly, he went to the House, and requested that they would give him an order to attend, that he might disprove the charge.

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, April* 24, 1839.

"For a number of years the wretched advocates of oppression, goaded by the opposition I have ever felt it my duty to make against cruelty and wrong, have endeavoured to injure my private character by the most mean and reptile falsehoods that ever emanated from the polluted thought of man. Generally, as you are aware, I have treated the abuse with which I have been loaded with contempt; but, by the advice of some of my brethren, I have now sent out an action against the editors of the *Despatch* and others for conspiracy. Even in Kingston, however, the bill, though supported by most respectable testimony, was ignored.

"I have to request the committee to vindicate my injured character, and, if possible, to obtain from the government a special hearing of this case. I feel that my friends in England will not allow me to be publicly placarded on oath, through the streets of the town in which I live, and through the newspapers, as a thief, a drunkard, and a liar, and not attempt to obtain for me the justice which, as a Briton, I have a right to demand. Do not suppose, my dear sir, that I am actuated by any feelings of revenge against these men. I should not have thus acted at all, had not others thought it necessary. The contempt I feel for their bitterest scorn is equalled only by the detestation with which I view their abominable actions. They are the meanest specimens of intelligent existence that crawl and warm themselves under the light and heat of the sun. No possible baseness is beneath them, no falsehood too gross for them to forge and publish. I leave for the present the case entirely in the hands of the committee, and shall wait your reply before I act further."

On the 18th of May he solicited the active interference of his friend Dr. Hoby, in the following terms:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"I have sent, through my attorney, the whole case home to Fen Court, and as a personal favour I beg you to move in this matter. *The News and Sunday Globe*, published in London, has declared that they have made inquiry, and that part of the affidavit is true, and this is now going the round of the Jamaica prints. I am confident that a fairer opportunity of showing what infernal liars (excuse the word, a better one to describe them exists not in the English language) some of the people of Jamaica are, has never been presented to the committee. What I want is, that the committee respectfully and urgently request that the government will cause a special commission to inquire into this matter, and that they as a committee will search the matter to the very bottom, and publish the result. If this is not done, I will directly come home. My character, which is my all, is at stake; and I will hurl stern defiance at my base calumniators, and prove their assertions to be false. Do not mistake me, I do not want to come home. What persons think of my plans of acting, affects me very little; but to have my moral character blasted by these hell-born monsters of iniquity, and to be denied the common appeal to the laws of my country, because I am a detester of slavery, is what as a British subject I will not submit to."

On the 4th of July the trial of Mr. Dyer, the editor of the *Cornwall Courier*, came on at Montego Bay; and I suspend the further notice of Jones's affidavit, in order to give an account of the proceedings. From the report of them printed in Jamaica at the time, I extract a brief view of the case, as an illustration of the treatment to which Knibb was at this period systematically subjected.

The information was tried before Chief Justice Sir Joshua Rowe; the counsel for the prosecution were the attorney-general and Mr. Mackeson; for the defendant, Mr. Stevenson. The libel consisted in several articles inserted in the *Cornwall Courier* of the 25th of July, 1838, first giving an account of a burglary in which some island checks had been stolen, then alluding to "Father Knibb's first of August offerings," and adding, "Rev. Father, doubtless you would have no objection to receive some of the checks *n'importe* how they were acquired, by way of free contributions."

After the opening of the case by Mr. Mackeson, and the examination and cross-examination of the witnesses,—

"Mr. Stevenson addressed the jury for the defence, and contended that there was no libel whatever in the article; but that, if they were of opinion that it was libellous, the libel was not on Mr. Knibb, but on Richard Williams and Francis Moody. But if Mr. Knibb felt he was the person libelled, he (Mr. S.) would ask, Had he not given sufficient provocation? Had he not, through his own organ, the *Falmouth Post*, said enough to draw upon him the severity of these remarks?

"Mr. Mackeson.—Oh, your honour, there is no evidence—

"The Attorney General (smiling).—Let them get on, let them get on.

"Mr. Stevenson.—Mr. Knibb has come into this court, complaining of a libel, which, in fact, was elicited by a libel of *his* on the whole community. [The learned gentlemen then read a paragraph or two from the *Falmouth Post* of the 25th July, 1838, in which appears a report of a public meeting held in Mr. Knibb's chapel, at which the reverend gentleman is reported to have said,—'My people have promised to put me in a position on the 1st of August by which the missionary committee will be considerably relieved, and they shall not be imposed upon. If the attorneys will act fairly, I will do all in my power to facilitate them; but if secret meetings are held at Montego Bay—if by a remodelling of the infamous Colonial Union, they think to oppress the people, they will find themselves mistaken.' And again, Mr. Knibb says,—'With the omnipotence of the British Parliament, with the voice of a free nation, with a governor who feels the worth of the people he governs, with a noble band of patriots engaged on our side, and with the blessing of Heaven, we *must* succeed. Some persons have said that the negroes won't pay for what they receive: I know that they pay me very well.'] Now, gentlemen,—

"His honour the Chief.—I think it very creditable to Mr. Knibb's people that they take upon themselves the burden of supporting him voluntarily.

"Mr. Stevenson.—I was going to show you, gentlemen, that this inflammatory speech of Mr. Knibb was the cause of these remarks.

"MR. MACKESON.—But will your honour please to look at the date of the paper which my learned friend has read from?

"THE ATTORNEY-GENERAL (ironically).—Yes, it will do very well. The speech reported on the *same day* that the libel is published on, is *the cause* of the libel. Let them get on. (*Laughter.*)

"THE CHIEF-JUSTICE.—That will not serve you, Mr. Stevenson.

"MR. STEVENSON said, he would not say another word on the subject; he would leave the matter to the jury, and he was sure they would show themselves worthy of the high compliment paid them by the opposite counsel."

After this absolute and ludicrous breaking down of a defence, the attorney-general replied, and the chief-justice summed up in the following terms:—

"HIS HONOUR THE CHIEF-JUSTICE.—This is a criminal information against Mr. Dyer, a printer in the town of Falmouth, brought by the Rev. Mr. Knibb, a baptist missionary. It will become my duty, gentlemen, to explain to you the law on the subject of libel, as well as to comment upon the evidence. It will be your duty, gentlemen, to consider both the law and the facts of the case; for, in proceedings for libel, you are not only judges of the facts, but also judges of the law. But it is still the duty of the court to dwell upon the facts, and upon the evidence which has been produced, to direct you in your finding.

"The evidence produced has established the fact that Mr. Dyer is the proprietor, or owner, and the publisher, of the *Cornwall Courier*. Of this fact, gentlemen, there can be no doubt whatever. Respecting this there was more than abundant evidence, indeed much more than it was necessary to produce. The Court will tell you, gentlemen, how far the privileges of a printer extend, and how far publications may go without being restrained by the arm of the law. For the public good, gentlemen, a printer may discuss all public actions, and may censure or approve of public acts as he pleases; but when the sacredness of private character is invaded, when anything is published to bring a man into contempt, or to injure his reputation, such publications are no longer to be allowed. If a printer libels any person's character, that person has the right to appeal to law, either by criminal information, by indictment, or by a civil action for damages.

"Notwithstanding the very ingenious way in which the learned counsel for the defence has endeavoured to show you that there is no libel, or that it does not apply to Mr. Knibb, it has been clearly proved to you, by evidence the plainest and most abundant that I know of, that the character of the publication was extremely libellous, and that it was intended to bring Mr. Knibb into contempt. This, gentlemen, and this only, was the animus and the object of the publication.

"The libel is headed, 'First of August Free Offerings to Father Knibb.' The word *free* is written in such characters as were intended to draw public attention to what follows: and, in another part of the libel it is asserted, that Mr. Knibb, (for no other person is meant by the phrase 'Rev. Father,' than the 'Father Knibb' at the head of the article,) that Mr. Knibb would have no objection to receive the checks, no matter how they were acquired, 'by way of free contributions.' The libel goes on: 'Richard Williams, a carpenter negro, residing at Duncans, was concerned in the burglary at Messrs. Sievwright and Co.'s store, in this town, on Sunday night. He was taken into custody on Monday night, but escaped from the persons who had him in charge, having first delivered to them a bundle containing articles of wearing apparel stolen from the store, and a small red trunk which had been abstracted from the chest, that had contained about two dollars and a half in silver, belonging to the St. Andrew's kirk.' So far there was nothing offensive. But look at the next sentence, and view it in connexion with the head of the article, and you cannot mistake the direct application of it to Mr. Knibb's chapel. 'Thus he was robbing a church, intending the spoil, no doubt, as an offering to the baptist chapel.' And then it is emphatically added: 'This fellow, with his wife, are members of Knibb's congregation.' Now, gentlemen, when we see the direct connexion of the first line with this assertion, there cannot exist any doubt that it was intended to bring Mr. Knibb and his congregation into contempt. This, therefore, gentlemen, is a direct libel on Mr. Knibb and his church.

"Then, again, the next paragraph refers to another robbery. 'Francis Moody, head cartman on Stonehenge estate, was yesterday brought before the sitting magistrates at the police office, charged with opening sundry barrels of provisions, and boxes of soap and candles, and stealing part of their contents in their transit from the wharf to the property.' Here, again, gentlemen, there is nothing offensive. This is published for the public benefit, and very properly holds up a public offender to public censure. But, when

I shall read the rest of the paragraph, you will see, gentlemen, how extremely injurious it is to the reputation of Mr. Knibb and his congregation. 'This immaculate gentleman is one of Father Knibb's class-leaders. If his disciples will only follow his practice, they will soon reap their reward—the gallows. He was remanded until Saturday for further examination, several persons from neighbouring properties being implicated with him, all of whom, we learn, are baptists.' There was no doubt that the effect and tendency of these remarks would be, and were intended, to bring the baptist church into disrepute. The next paragraph refers to the robbery committed at the store of Messrs. Sievwright and Company:—'We understand that Knibb, on hearing of the robbery at Messrs. Sievwright and Co.'s store, exclaimed, 'It serves him right, he had no business to turn out his set at Christmas.' Rev. Father, doubtless you would have no objection to receive some of the checks, *n'importe* how they were acquired, by way of *free* contributions.' An objection has been raised, that because the word *him* has been used instead of *them*, the allusion is not to Mr. Sievwright: it is sufficient for me to say that this is merely a grammatical error, and does not at all influence the libellous character of the article. Now, gentlemen, this is the whole of the alleged libel. In our opinion there is no doubt as to its libellous character; for it is an imputation of the willingness of Mr. Knibb to take money, no matter how it was acquired, as free offerings for the support of the church, and that Mr. Knibb wished it to be believed and understood it was right for Mr. Sievwright to be robbed. Therefore it strikes me that this is an article which imputes improper motives to Mr. Knibb. You can have no doubt, gentlemen, that the intention of this article was to lower Mr. Knibb in the eyes of his people, and in the estimation of the public generally. It does not state that Mr. Knibb had received the stolen money, but it is insinuated by an inuendo that Mr. Knibb was *willing* to receive it. It appears to me that the only object of the libel, therefore, was to lower the character of Mr. Knibb—this appears on the very face of the libel—and to lessen his character, not only in the estimation of his congregation, but in the estimation of others. If, gentlemen, you adopt these views—if you think, as the court thinks, that a case of libel has been made out, it will be your duty to find Mr. Dyer guilty. You are, gentlemen, in cases of libel, not only judges of the facts, but also judges of the law. If your opinion is the same as that of the court, that this libel is calculated to bring Mr. Knibb into disrepute, you must find Mr. Dyer guilty. If, however, it is your opinion that this is a harmless publication, then you will of course say Mr. Dyer is not guilty. Here is the paper, and you are the proper judges to decide upon the character and tendency of the publication."

After this charge, the jury, without retiring, returned a verdict of Not guilty.

I shall add nothing to this account of the trial, but the few words prefixed to the report of it by Knibb himself.

"Although the newspaper press of this island might for years have justified almost weekly prosecutions for the vindication of my own and my people's character, yet we were contented rather to suffer, believing that the spirit of selfish recklessness and mischief which obviously dictated the writing was a sufficient protection. When, however, a direct charge of felony was ventured into circulation, we thought forbearance longer might be considered culpable, and that in such a case even a JAMAICA JURY might do us justice.

"Accordingly, acting on the advice of our solicitors, we selected such a form of proceeding as would leave it open to the offending party to justify the libel if he could. We filed affidavits denying the charges, and moved in the grand court, on reading these, for leave to file a criminal prosecution. After the lapse of many months (on account of the large arrear of other business), our opponent not deeming it advisable to peril himself by an attempt at justification, leave was granted; he knowing he had nothing to hope for from responsible judges, but from a PREJUDICED, CORRUPT, AND IRRESPONSIBLE JURY, everything. How far the result has justified his expectation has been evident even to our enemies. It has convinced us that we are without the protection of the law for our lives, liberties, or reputations; and that the legislature must consider and apply a remedy. No country can be quiet, and work prosperously, if any considerable portion of its effective population do not entertain confidence in the purity of the administration of its judicial business.

"In behalf of my deeply-injured people, I make no appeal save what these pages unfold. The man who would make such unfounded assertions, and then shrink from their proof, knowing that he was sure to escape when men every way equally corrupt were to be the judges of his conduct, cannot demand even a passing word. I do not publish this trial in the hope of working any reformation in the minds of a Jamaica jury—that I believe impossible; but in England, where truth is respected, I have no doubt I shall accomplish for my church all that I desire, and shall prove to the world the totally unfounded nature of the charges preferred against a body of Christians justly odious to tyrants, on account of that indomitable love of liberty by which they have ever been distinguished."

After the decision of this case, Knibb wrote to Mr. Dyer in the following terms:—"I now claim protection from home. I am perfectly defenceless. These men have only to procure any wretch, like Tom Jones, to swear to any awful act of sin as committed by me, and though I be as innocent as an angel, the jury would rejoice to find me guilty. I shall not be in the least surprised if they should do so. I tell you plainly that there is a combination formed to effect this, not only with me, but with every obnoxious individual. They have the jury-box in their own hands, and there they can do what they please. You can protect us if you will. I am confident the people of England will assist."

On the 30th of July he wrote again as follows:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, July* 30, 1839.

"The trial in the case of Jones has cost me more than £200 currency, and I am at a loss to meet it. The church will pay the expense in Dyer's case. I do hope that the committee will take some firm steps in this matter, and I shall wait with much anxiety a reply to my late letters. If I do not get any I shall come home. It is of no use to stop here with *my* principles; any villain has only to trump up a charge against me, and ruin me by law expenses. Many abominable reports are abroad, and if the villains of Jamaica can make a row, they will; but they will not succeed in Trelawney. We know them too well either to believe or fear them. I often wish that the committee could actually see the specimens of human nature here exhibited: I am sure it would make you pity us. If the committee will but support me, I do not mind all the rogues here; but if not, it gives them a handle which annoys me much."

I find a letter to Dr. Hoby, dated the 5th of September, the language of which implies that his friend had thought him somewhat too sensitive to these assaults. His defence is thus given: —

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Falmouth, September* 5, 1839.

"In taking notice of the continued attempts to injure my character, I acted under the advice, and with the approbation, of my brethren and influential gentlemen who appeared interested in my welfare. I was chiefly impelled by two considerations: first, I hoped by the exposure to show the utter disregard of truth, and even of Jamaica oaths, in any assertion where I was concerned: secondly, I hoped also to prevent persons excluded from our churches for improper conduct making a handle of the silence manifested, when charges of theft, drunkenness, and lying were not only published in the papers, but posted throughout the town in which I reside. I deeply regret that you should disapprove."

The feeling exhibited by Dr. Hoby had, I believe, been pretty general in the breasts of the committee. They did not see it necessary, either to solicit the government to institute a special inquiry, or to commence proceedings at law in England; they did, however, procure the preparation of a document contradicting the false statements which had been put into circulation, and forward this to Jamaica. In acknowledging the receipt of this document Knibb writes as follows: —

TO MR. DYER.

"*Refuge, September* 17, 1839.

"On the subject which has caused me so much anxiety, and has put me to very great expense, I shall just express my mind, and leave the matter to be arranged as the committee may think fit. You will perhaps remember that, prior to this and other gross attacks, it had been confidently asserted, that on account of my advocacy of the people's rights, the committee had recalled me. This was announced in the public prints on the authority of Mr. Burge, who said he had it from the committee. The part you took in the infamous falsehood circulated against the members of my church, charging them with arming by the ten thousand for my defence, appeared, to say the least, to countenance the impression that some interview had taken place with that political reptile. I could not deny that you had seen him, or affirm that you had not expressed your disapprobation of my conduct, however much I might disbelieve it. Now comes a charge on oath of the most revolting description, published by the paid organ of the West Indian party, the *John Bull* and by the *News*, which is supported extensively by the reputable portion of Jamaica, each affirming that it is a true history. As such it has been copied into the influential tory prints in the larger towns, and forwarded out to me. Thus, in my opinion, and in that of my friends here, the West Indian body have made it their own. This did appear to me, and to others, a fair opportunity of showing in a court of law the utter disregard to truth manifested by the advocates of oppression. For this purpose, at the urgent request of friends, I entered actions against all the parties in Jamaica, so laid that my enemies might prove all they could, and you know the result. I think the committee must be aware that these attacks are made upon me, and that this open denial of justice has been manifested, on account of the prominent part I have taken, both at home and in Jamaica, in the cause of the oppressed; therefore I do feel that I ought to be sustained by the publicly expressed opinion of the committee, that is, if they think my conduct deserves it, if not, I should be glad for that to be as publicly known. One motive that weighed considerably with me, was the handle that might be made of the charges by those self-constituted teachers who are expelled for crime, among a yet ignorant population. I feared, as did others, that were no notice taken of it, in time mischief would be the result. One thing, however, has been gained; I have publicly dared my accusers to the proof, even where my enemies were to be my judges. I have faced them in their own den. The cowards have shrunk from the contest, and I have wrung even from my bitterest foes the acknowledgment that I have not obtained, and cannot obtain, justice. I have thrown the shield of protection, too, around my grossly defamed church, who were charged with a participation in my crimes; and I now leave the event to Him who will, I have no doubt, manifest even in this his own glory.

"I have now done with the subject. I shall still pursue the path which a regard to the will of God dictates, and let the enemies of truth do their worst. They have now assailed me fifteen years, by means the most disreputable that ever human beings devised. Publicly I have met them, and have dared them to substantiate one accusation against my moral character, or my conduct as a missionary. There is not a single man among them that has dared to meet the challenge. They know they are liars, and very soon all reasonable men will know the same."

Constrained in part by the entanglement of another of their agents in somewhat similar toils, the committee proceeded, on the 25th of September, to pass the following resolutions, which were published, and widely circulated, in the papers of the day: —

"I. That this committee have heard, with equal disgust and indignation, of recent judicial proceedings in Jamaica, affecting their devoted and esteemed missionaries, the Rev. William Knibb and the Rev. Samuel Oughton; proceedings by which justice has been flagrantly denied to the former, and atrocious injustice has been inflicted on the latter. Under these trying circumstances, the committee feel it incumbent on them promptly to declare their sincere sympathy with their persecuted brethren, whom they cheerfully assure of their unabated confidence and resolute support.

"II. That, as the measures which remain to be taken in order to secure justice, as well as those which have already been adopted, involve heavy expenses, which cannot be permitted to fall on the parties themselves, this committee confidently anticipate that an adequate subscription will be raised by the British public, in which they are persuaded the friends of the Baptist Missionary Society will cordially co-operate, with a view to defray the costs of all the sufferers in these iniquitous proceedings."

The pecuniary effort here adverted to was subsequently made, under the name of the Jamaica Persecution Fund, and grants were liberally voted to Knibb, in common with other parties who were at that time suffering from a similar cause. The moral effect of the resolutions also was good. They were soothing to the mind of Knibb himself; and they likewise diffused through the public a conviction that it was not in the power of calumny to separate the missionaries from their supporters in England, and that consequently the employment of its most envenomed shafts was useless. The following letter was written by Knibb on the receipt of them: —

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, November* 26, 1839.

"It is to me a source of high gratification that the violent agitations which have so long distracted this colony have much subsided, and I most fervently pray that they may never be revived. Calumny appears to have spent its strength; and though as a British subject I have been denied common justice, I have convinced even my enemies of the utter falsity of the infamous charges preferred against me. I shall feel much obliged to you if you will convey to the committee my sincere thanks, for the noble and energetic resolutions to which you refer in your last letter. They have removed every fear I entertained that my proceedings were viewed with disapprobation by them. I have made up my mind never in future to notice any slander at all in Jamaica. I feel now that I have discharged my sacred duty to the society I love, as well as to the anti-slavery portion of the empire, with whom my feeble efforts in the cause of liberty have identified me. In the very hotbed of colonial infamy, Montego Bay, in the very room where my life was threatened, and on the spot where I was arraigned for sedition, have I defied even malice to prove one of her oft-repeated slanders; and well contented am I with the result. My foes have overshot the mark. Had I obtained justice, the purity of Jamaica juries had been established, and Stainsby and Oughton would have been thought to have had a fair trial. Here then let it rest. My Heavenly Father enables me to say, that nothing would give me greater pleasure than to do any act of kindness to those who have for years sought the ruin of my character. This I felt at the trial, and in case of conviction I had instructed my counsel not to move for judgment. Oh, they need pity and prayer. I can truly say that their conversion to God would give me joy unspeakable. I write thus to you, but do not print it, as it will savour of egotism, or of assumption of superior piety, which I do not possess."

The matter, however, did not end here. The warm and generous sympathy of an individual led ultimately to a legal investigation of this case in England. Mr. Henry Wait Hall, a solicitor then residing at Bristol, offered at his own expense to bring the matter to trial. Knibb was overwhelmed with this kindness, and he accepted the offer. An action was accordingly brought, under the sanction of the opinion of the late Mr. Sergeant Bompas, against the editor of the *John Bull*, and tried in the Court of Queen's Bench, before Lord Chief-justice Denman, on the 27th of February, 1840. The attorney-general (Campbell), Mr. Sergeant Bompas, and Mr. Cockburn, appeared for the plaintiff; Sir William Follett and Mr. Montague Smith for the defendant. The libel complained of was contained in a leading article of the editor (the late Theodore Hook) to the following effect:—

"We have submitted this last statement of the committee (alluding to an extract from a Jamaica paper) relative to the universally acknowledged influence and power of the baptist missionaries on the blacks, not only because of the open and undisguised encouragement which is afforded to these most mischievous persons by the saintly underlings of Downing Street and the hypocrites of Aldermanbury, but *because we are enabled to lay before our readers an affidavit, exhibiting upon oath the true and real character of the very head and leader of the class by which the peace of the colony, and the property of its inhabitants, are jeopardized and endangered, the Reverend William Knibb.*"

The affidavit of Jones is then inserted, under the heading, "AN AUTHENTIC NARRATIVE." Sir W. Follett spoke in mitigation of damages merely. From the report of the trial as given in the papers of the day, I extract the summing up of Lord Denman.

"Lord DENMAN, in summing up, said, he saw no reason to doubt that this was an extract from a Jamaica paper (a point which Sir W. Follett had argued in defence); but if an editor of a paper chose to make extracts from another paper reflecting on the character of an individual, he must be held responsible for having done so; and it could not be supposed that any person not acquainted with the plaintiff could read this article without Mr. Knibb's character suffering in his estimation. Had the matter related to occurrences in Jamaica, the observations of the learned counsel in mitigation of damages might have been entitled to some consideration; but, when it was recollected that the libel referred to circumstances supposed to have occurred in England, and was couched in the shape of a voluntary affidavit made before two justices, who had no right to suffer any affidavit whatever reflecting on any man's character to be taken before them, he thought the editor of a paper ought to have been very cautious how he admitted such an article. His lordship commented severely on the conduct of the justices in Jamaica, Mr. Wiltshire and Mr. Vickers, who had allowed the deponent to swear the libel in question before them in the form of an affidavit—a proceeding which they had no more power to adopt than he (Lord Denman) had to receive from some person a voluntary affidavit, reflecting libellously upon any one of the gentlemen of the jury. Upon the subject of an apology (another point pressed by Sir W. Follett), his lordship said that he saw no reason why a person who had been greatly libelled should be obliged to appeal to the discretion of the libeller, as to whether he should make satisfaction or not. This principle would give the defendants entire judgment over their own conduct; but he (Lord Denman) thought that, generally speaking, the best plan of deciding such questions was to bring them into open court. With regard to the present case, his lordship sent the newspaper to the jury, and told them to return a verdict with such damages as were justified by the circumstances of the case."

The jury, after an absence of about an hour, returned a verdict for the plaintiff—damages £70.

From a communication with which I have been favoured by Mr. Hall, I extract the following remarks on the proceedings :—

> "The trial took place at the Guildhall, before a set of London merchants, among whom were no less than three West India merchants. I almost despaired of anything more than nominal damages, when I found the jury thus constituted, all evidence of the falsehood of the libel excluded, the tame address of Campbell, and the extremely artful and powerful address of Follett. Nothing but the honesty of Lord Denman, and the high character of London merchants (for there were some of the leading merchants on that jury), saved the case. The court was crammed, and the feeling was too strong to be got rid of by nominal damages; but there was an hour's fight for it between the summing up and the verdict.
>
> "The result of such a verdict in such a court, between a persecuted missionary and the recognized organ of the planters abroad and the high church party at home, was highly beneficial to Mr. Knibb in the scene of his labours. He was deeply grateful for it, and I believe, to the day of his death, felt his obligation for the trouble, expense, and anxiety with which I pursued, and ultimately achieved, his vindication. Why Follett worked so hard, and went so much out of his way, to defeat the action, was that Hook was an intimate personal friend."

I am well satisfied that Mr. Hall has not in these terms overstated, either the salutary effect of the verdict, or Knibb's deep sense of obligation. He will permit me to attach to the record of the transaction in these pages an expression of gratitude and admiration, to which many hearts will respond.

Among the schemes to which Knibb's fertile and enterprising mind gave birth for the instruction and advancement of the emancipated classes, was the origination of a weekly newspaper, which he modestly calls " a small paper for the people." This, in combination with his brethren, he ultimately effected. The paper was called the *Baptist Herald and Friend of Africa*, and the first number of it was issued in September, 1839. "There are many things," said he to Mr. Sturge, "which it is needful for the people to know, which are not fit subjects for the pulpit." The *Baptist Herald* has undoubtedly been an instrument of considerable utility and power.

The reader has probably noticed several intimations of an inclination on the part of Knibb to revisit his native shores, for the vindication, partly of his own character, and partly of that of the labouring classes generally. Other considerations now added their force to these, and he ultimately resolved on returning to England in the spring of 1840. The following extract from a letter to Mr. Dyer opens his mind on this subject:—

TO MR. DYER.

"*Falmouth, November* 26, 1839.

"Several of my brethren have, after much deliberation, requested me to come home in order to be at the Anti-Slavery Convention to be held in London; and, after having made what arrangements should appear desirable, to proceed, if necessary, to Africa, on a tour of discovery. At present the path does not appear made plain. Should the request be unanimous at the coming association, and should I be able to obtain a supply for my church, as Mrs. Knibb is not at all disposed to throw any obstacle in the way, I should almost incline to accede to the request. I have no will of my own in the matter. Ease, and comfort, and an affectionate people, and all the charms and claims of domestic life, would say, Stay where you are; but if duty says, Go, I hope my Heavenly Father has given me grace to say, 'Let him do with me as seemeth him good.' I wish in this to be entirely directed by God; and all I can say is, that if such be his will, I shall esteem it an honour to be permitted to fulfil it. O what a mercy, what a mercy, to be permitted to do anything for God! I am often overwhelmed with the greatness of that condescension which allows it.

"The plan I have proposed to myself is, first to visit America, and obtain what information I can; thence to proceed to England, where I should like to arrive about April, attend the convention, and any other meetings that might be deemed advisable; then to go to Sierra Leone, where there is a baptist church, and from whence I learn I can get to many parts of the coast; and after making all the inquiries in my power, to return to England, form a society to assist, and come home to Jamaica, to carry on the glorious work. There are several young men now training for this arduous employ, who could yet be under instruction, while these (in my opinion) necessary preliminaries are taken. I think I am deeply sensible of the great responsibility, and of the great risk involved, in such an undertaking. All I can say is, if I go, I go in the strength of a great God; and I do very deeply feel that, if he should enable me to do it, the utter insufficiency of the agency employed will make the aboundings of his love and goodness more fully to appear. I have thus fully opened my mind, and I leave the subject without one anxious thought, breathing out the fervent prayer, Let the time, yea, the set time, to favour Africa come, O Lord!"

In the issue his brethren unanimously requested him to attend the Anti-Slavery Convention to be held in London in June, 1840, as their delegate, commissioning him at the same time to press forward the projected mission to Africa. With these two great objects in view, but also under a feeling prostration of strength, which he hoped a voyage would remove, he resolved to comply with the request presented to him. We will set out with him in his voyage in the next chapter.

A single domestic change occurs within the period assigned to this present chapter, namely, the birth of a daughter in the beginning of June, 1839.

CHAPTER XIV.

HIS SECOND VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Knibb sailed from Jamaica in the month of February, 1840, with his eldest two daughters, his relative Mrs. Dendy and her son, and two coloured brethren, Messrs. Barrett and Beckford. Of the incidents of his voyage, some interesting details are preserved in three letters to his wife, written in the course of it. These letters, as will naturally be supposed, enter somewhat minutely into a class of particulars always more interesting to parents than to any other persons; I insert, however, all that I am permitted to insert of them, not merely because they are Knibb's, but because they aid materially my general object, the portraiture of his character. They present him to us in a new and unaccustomed attitude; an attitude, on the one hand, far from uninteresting in itself, and on the other, presenting a most agreeable contrast to that in which we have lately been viewing him. From the hero, grappling like a giant with fierce oppression, we turn now to the fond husband and the tender father. But the man is the same, and his character is everywhere noble and beautiful.

TO HIS WIFE.

"*At sea, off the Island of Cuba, 31st March,* 1840.

"My dear Mary,—When I shall finish this depends much upon the weather. Hitherto we have been placed in such trying circumstances that I knew not that I should ever write to you again; but we have had to sing of mercy as well as of judgment, and a kind and powerful Father has appeared for our succour. You will have learned by my last from Kingston that we were obliged to return to Port Royal, the vessel having sprung a leak. We again set sail on the Friday following, and all appeared ready for a prosperous voyage. On Saturday morning the alarming sound, 'Breakers ahead,' was heard, and as the sun had not shone for two days, and a strong current was running, we knew not exactly where we were. However, these we weathered in safety, and all appeared right; but the same evening, when I was looking for a psalm to read, and the dear children were preparing for bed, the vessel struck upon a reef, going full seven miles an hour at the time. Oh! it was a serious time. I had all the children dressed, commended them to God, and went on deck to see what could be done. There lay the vessel on a bed of hard sand, surrounded by rocks on which the waves dashed and foamed. During the night she pitched heavily, and I feared she would go to pieces. But God was there. The wind lulled, and our opinion soon was that she would lie till morning. The dear girls expressed a humble hope in the blood of Jesus, and soon fell fast asleep. Dear little William said with great simplicity, 'Not my will, but thine be done,' and fell fast asleep. I sat up with Mrs. Dendy all night, or nearly so, and I think we both felt the value of an interest in Christ, and a good hope through grace of eternal life. Towards morning the ship rolled heavily, and we longed for the break of day, that we might attempt something for our rescue, having secured a change of linen, should we be obliged to leave by the boat. The captain sent out a small anchor, to see if the vessel would wear off, but the ground was so bad that it would not hold. The only hope left was in throwing the cargo overboard, and all hands at once commenced. I think I never worked harder in my life. About half-past four, sabbath evening, our efforts were crowned with success; she floated, a breeze sprung up in the right quarter just at the same moment, and in a few minutes the vessel was in deep water. Though we had been on the bank for twenty-two hours, she had not sprung a leak. We had to throw over about five thousand pounds' worth of coffee and preserves, and other materials of which the cargo was composed. We had not got off more than three hours, when the wind shifted and blew half a gale, so that had we not succeeded when we did, as far as human supposition can go, we must have been a complete wreck. Thus again has life been preserved, and I hope it will be for the glory of God. I have been thus minute because I am writing to one who will be pleased to know all; and my dear Mary will rejoice with me that she is not a disconsolate widow, and bereft of her beloved children. Oh! these were hours of mental agony, but it was combined with a simple hope in Jesus. My beloved wife, my tender children, the dear ones left with you, my brethren, and the church, all crowded into my mind, with an intensity supported only by the conviction that I was in the hands of Him who has so often appeared for my succour in the hour of need.

"There is much profanity on board, nor do I expect to do much in the way of public instruction. I shall not press it, but if any choose to worship with us, I shall be glad to see them. The children, all of them, have generally behaved very well. After breakfast they each bring me a hymn they have learned with a text of scripture; we then read three or four psalms, sing a hymn, and have prayer. In the account of one day you have the account of the whole, that is, wind and weather permitting. Hitherto I have enjoyed much communion with God, combined, I hope, with much humility for past neglect of duty.

"I shall hope to hear good tidings of the church and congregation; but should the reverse be the case, I hope to feel resignation to Him whose cause I have humbly endeavoured to promote. The more I meditate on the subject, the more I am convinced that the set time to favour Africa is come; and that whatever trials may be in reserve for the churches in Jamaica, or whatever future prosperity may be her lot, the Divine Being is about to take unto himself his great power, and reign in that desolated part of the earth. I feel a daily, and, I hope, a growing desire to live to the glory of God; and should we be spared again to meet, I hope we shall be permitted to labour together in this all-important work. Give my kind love to all the little Africans: tell them to walk in the fear of God, and their happiness is ensured. Let ——— know that I feel interested in his welfare, and hope he will train up his children in the fear of the Lord. Tell the sabbath-school teachers and children that I think of them and pray for them.

"May the Lord God keep and bless you, and richly bestow upon you all new covenant blessings. I hope to get through the reading of the bible during the voyage."

TO THE SAME.

April 13, *At sea.*

"MY DEAR MARY,—The dear children are in the enjoyment of health, but the confinement appears to hang heavily upon them.

and leads to many displays of temper which I could desire not to see manifested. This, however, was to be expected, and I have no doubt that when they get on shore, it will in a great measure disappear. My daily prayer is that God would convert them, and then will my heart rejoice. My mind is almost constantly dwelling on the home scenes I have left; the images of Coultart and Fanny are ever before me, and the thousand and one occupations which engross your time are subjects with which I beguile many weary hours. It is a great mercy, at least to me, that we were ever united, and I assure you, my dear girl, that I long for the time when I shall be homeward bound.

"*April 27th, Monday morning.*—We are, as you would expect, still at sea, and I am trying to add a few lines with a boy on my knee. Until this morning we have had a succession of fair winds, and with the exception of two days, weather much finer than I have before experienced at sea. As we have kept much to the south, it has not been so cold as I expected it would be. We have had our family prayer morning and evening, with the exception of one or two days, and service on the Lord's day among ourselves; none of the crew or passengers have joined us, and the profanity of some of them is very much to be deplored. Until this morning we fully expected to land at Liverpool by Friday, that is, the day after the annual meeting; but it has pleased the Divine Being to exercise our patience, and we have now a wind which must change ere we can enter the Channel, from which we are distant about one hundred and fifty miles. My mind is often much exercised respecting the church. O that God may in his mercy keep and bless them! I shall now fancy you at Refuge, with Coultart and Fanny playing on the green, and you pursuing your many duties, with dear Tom at his books or his music. Tell ——, and ——, and the rest of them a kind 'how de,' together with the deacons in that quarter of the church.

"*May 2nd.*—We are still on board the vessel, with a foul wind, and when we shall arrive is known only to Him who directs the winds and the waves as he pleases. We were close to land last Monday, the 27th of April, with a fair wind and way, and a prospect of being in Liverpool in four days; but on Tuesday morning it failed, and a calm of two days succeeded, which has been followed by a foul wind, which still keeps us on the borders of Ireland. It has rather a gloomy aspect, our food is nearly all consumed, the children's clothes are nearly all torn or dirty, and patience has not yet her perfect work. However, it must all be right, though painful at present. At our family prayer meeting the children have read with myself and Mrs. Dendy, and we have thus gone through the psalms; at the close of each reading I have read a short comment, and we are now proceeding a second time through them, I hope not without some profit. The children have very generally repeated a hymn, and a verse of scripture, every morning, which I hope they will remember when they are separated from both of us. In their behalf I have most sincerely wrestled with God, that he would make them interested in the death of Jesus. O may he in mercy hear our prayers in this matter! My beloved William is often in my thoughts, but I am afraid it is not with that submission which it becomes us to feel at so painful a visitation of Divine Providence."

TO THE SAME.

"*Liverpool, Sabbath morning, May* 10.

"MY DEAR MARY,—Having enjoyed sweet communion with God in commending you and the dear children to his care, I spend an hour, ere the family have arisen from their slumbers, to assure you that we have arrived in safety, and in the enjoyment of health. We are now at ——, and are as comfortable as she can, with her usual kindness, make us. I left the ship, in company with Mrs. Dendy and the children, at Holyhead, which is about sixty miles from Liverpool. It was a calm, and every prospect of a foul wind; our provisions were nearly exhausted, and the prospect of spending another sabbath on board was by no means inviting. We consequently went in a boat to Holyhead. Here we found out Mr. Morgan, the baptist minister, and were soon comfortably housed at an inn kept by a Wesleyan sister. It would have delighted your heart to see how the children made the bread and butter disappear. It really did my heart good to see them so happy; and then how the folks did stare, and the children jabber—surely Babel was not more confounded than were we. Nobody spoke English except the dogs. Then the ruddy countenances, and the honest good nature of the folks, made us feel quite at home. We went round the town, first to see the church-yard, then to the meeting-house, then to the abode of an aged female disciple. Ninety years has been her pilgrimage, and still she is hale and strong. There Mr. Morgan stop-ped, who came so hap-py; really it was the picture of humble neatness. Let me see—there sat the fine tortoise-shell cat close to the fire, which quietly consumed itself for our benefit. The two old arm-chairs would have spoken if they could, and told of the wonders of the last century. The best set of fire-irons, polished like a mirror, were posted on a small wainscot, which separated a small room used by the rev. divine as a study, in which were a chair, a table, and a candlestick, with portraits from the *Baptist Magazine* of some of the worthies. Then the bright copper warming-pan, the smoke-jack laid up in ordinary, and all the implements of enlarged cookery, arranged with the precision of a toy shop, and as clean as labour could make them, gave the extended mantlepiece a most inviting appearance. The other parts of the room were in perfect harmony; indeed a crockery shop could not have displayed more taste. It was necessary that everything should be in its place, for there was no room for it anywhere else. Well, there we are seated—cannot you see us? The good old body stirring up the fire, and shutting out every breath of air. She talks of the poor slaves, rejoices that they are now free, when all of a sudden out comes a volume of real Welsh. O that you had been there to interpret it, and to assist in drinking, in a glass of the days of George I., some of her choicest raspberry cordial, which I suppose was kept for special visitors. Well, she was a lovely Christian, and assured us with simplicity that she never went to bed without praying for the missionaries. We bade her farewell till we should meet in heaven. As the dear girls were in this lovely part of Wales, and as the time of the singing of birds was come, it was to me, and I think to all, a source of pleasure that we were obliged to travel through it, in order to reach a steamer to convey us to Liverpool. Well then, after a good night's rest, you must suppose us in an open landau, with two spanking horses, which was the only way we could travel all together. We started at five in the morning, and all nature was dressed in loveliness; the mounting lark (which sang in English) sweetly warbled the praises of its Maker, the blossom of the may-bush sent forth its fragrancy, the corn sprang up in its freshness, and the shrubs and trees were clothed with leaves, while the blossom of the apple and other fruit-trees assured us that there was not only beauty, but plenty, in store for man. We sang mother's favourite hymn, as Kate calls it—'Guide me, O thou great Jehovah;' and after a pleasant ride of twenty-three miles, we came to the Menai bridge, the most wonderful structure I ever beheld. There we took a steamer, which in six hours safely brought us to Liverpool."

Mr. Morgan, whose name is mentioned in the last of these letters, is still the baptist minister at Holyhead. I gather from a letter with which he has kindly favoured me, containing his recollections of this visit, that Knibb had no great taste for ecclesiastical antiquities; since he makes so slight mention of a parish church which is thirteen centuries old, and is dedicated to Saint Cybi. The inn at which he was entertained was the King's Arms, and the name of the "Wesleyan sister" was Roberts. The "aged female disciple" was one "at whose house baptist ministers used to take quarters, almost from the commencement of the cause in Holyhead." After some conversation at her house, Knibb asked the company to join him in "singing the old hundred;" an effort towards the cultivation of devotional sympathy which he was compelled after a time to relinquish, and which, indeed, as he must have sung in English and his friends in Welsh, must have been as near as the sublime could well be to the ludicrous. His brief visit afforded high gratification to all parties, and Mr. Morgan thus records it among the memorabilia of the principality:—"Holyhead may be proud that the immortal John Howe was in it in 1671, and the undaunted champion of liberty, William Knibb, in 1840."

A little further opening of Knibb's heart as exercised during the perilous condition of the ship, is contained in a letter to his relative, Mr. Dendy. I give the following extract:—"The dear children, my beloved partner, my brethren, the mission, my immortal soul, all rushed upon me in the prospect of eternity. Then, O that blessed atonement! that Rock of ages! It was sweet to have it to rely upon, and I did feel safe as a poor sinner through the blood of the Lamb. It was a deeply interesting and painful sight to see the dear children, and to hear their mournings over lost opportunities, their application to Jesus, their humble hope at length in his blood. I had them all dressed ready to take to the boats, packed up a few little matters, and committed all to Him who holds the winds in his fists, and the waters in the hollow of his hand."

To Mr. Abbott he communicated a circumstance not without interest, which occurred at the very commencement of the voyage. "I have to sing," he says, "of distinguished mercy. Just as the leak was found gaining on us, and it was blowing a gale, the spanker-beam jibed, and came upon me with a force which, if it had struck my head, would have literally crushed it to atoms. Mercifully it only took my hat, which I lost, while one of the ropes rent my gown; had it fallen a few inches lower I had not written this."

During the voyage he employed some of his leisure hours in writing a letter to his nephew, Thomas Knibb, the only child of his brother Thomas, who had some time previously been sent out by the committee, at his uncle's request, to Jamaica. The following passages are extracts: —

TO HIS NEPHEW, THOMAS KNIBB.

"*At Sea, May* 2, 1840.

"I have learned with heartfelt pleasure that you were earnestly inquiring what you must do to be saved, and I would indulge the pleasing hope that you have, ere this, obtained peace through the blood of Jesus. Your father was an eminent Christian, one who had to pass through many trials; both your parents has long been in heaven; but the Father of the fatherless has watched over you, and on his faithful promise you may confidently rely in every future step you may have to take through life. In consistency with the will of God, I pray that your health may be restored, so that, God calling you by his grace, you may be useful in the instruction of the rising generation in the land of your birth. You will find, my dear nephew, many temptations in Jamaica, and frequently see piety only in its infancy. A cruel system of gross oppression has sunk the population in ignorance and vice, therefore the deepest sympathy should be cherished for them by those whom God has placed in more favourable circumstances. May it be your happiness, and mine, daily to be found in the proper use of those talents God has entrusted us with, that at the final day of account we may receive the welcome announcement, that, having been faithful through the blood of Jesus, we may enter into the joy of our Lord. O what a mercy, to be able to anticipate such a glorious termination of our brief career on earth! What gratitude is due to Him from whom alone this hope proceeds! Let it be your daily desire to live unto him, that this hope, which 'maketh not ashamed,' may be realized in his presence where there is fulness of joy, and at his right hand where there are pleasures for evermore."

He was exercised during his voyage with deep anxiety respecting the great object of his mission. He felt that much depended on his success, but he was far from sanguine in his expectations of it. On this subject he wrote to Mr. Dendy on the 2nd of May, in the following terms:—"Of course I am all in the dark respecting my future movements. The adverse wind, which came upon us only three days' sail from Liverpool, will I fear detain me till all the May meetings are over. This, however, is so evidently the will of God, that all I have to do is quietly to wait until he shall see fit to bid me proceed; yet this, right as it is, is too much for the carnal mind, and I hourly feel that I need much prayer to keep me from disputing his will, or murmuring at his dispensations. O that he may sanctify me thoroughly, and in some humble measure fit me for the awfully important mission on which I am sent! That mission rises daily in importance in my mind, and I hope that all my beloved brethren will bring it frequently before the churches over which they preside, and be earnest at the throne of grace for the promised blessing."

At the annual meeting of the society Knibb had been confidently and eagerly expected, and great disappointment was occasioned by his absence. So much interest, however, attached to his arrival, and so much importance to the facts of which he was in undoubted possession, that a public meeting was convened at Exeter Hall on the 22nd of May, for the purpose, both of receiving him with due cordiality, and of enabling him to give his statement to the public with proper emphasis. Joseph Sturge, Esq., was in the chair, and the Hall, as usual, crowded. As the announced purpose of this meeting was "to receive the Rev. W. Knibb, and to hear accounts of the success of missionary exertions in the West Indies," there was no order of business. After a few observations, the chairman introduced, with expressions of cordial and justly deserved respect, the two coloured brethren whom Knibb had brought with him, Messrs. Barrett and Beckford, who respectively said a few words. Knibb then rose to address the assembly, and was received with several successive rounds of enthusiastic cheering, on the subsidence of which he spoke to the following effect: —

"It is, I assure you, with no ordinary feelings of pleasure that I find myself once more in Exeter Hall. My mind recurs to the scenes by which I was surrounded when, nearly eight years ago, I stood before my brethren and sisters, and claimed for those who are dear to me as life itself that liberty with which God has endowed all his creatures, and the restoration of that gospel which colonial slavery had vehemently endeavoured to destroy. The sympathy which was then manifested, the Christian principle which was then put forth, soon reached, in all its delightful power, and in all its energetic force, the island from whence I come; and now I have not to tell of desolated chapels, or of the murdered victims of despotic power; but I have the pleasing duty to perform of assuring you that the mother calls her children her own, that husbands and wives have begun to feel the full force of that relationship which in slavery could never exist, and that all have free access to the throne of mercy, undeterred by the scowls of the slave-driver, or by the operation of unjust and iniquitous laws. It was your privilege to hear the distant sounds of freedom; it was mine to witness the first burst of energetic joy. It was your privilege to hear that the emancipated sons and daughters of Africa fully redeemed the pledge which their devoted advocates had given on their behalf; it was my pleasure to witness, in the enjoyment of freedom, the acceleration of the triumphs of the cross, the execution of the purposes of redeeming love. Never, so long as memory holds her seat, shall I forget the delightful day which burst upon the islands of the West, when, disencumbered from the yoke which had bound their inhabitants age after age, parent and child stood forth in the full possession of those rights which had been so unjustly and so iniquitously withheld."

After this opening, and "before he proceeded to the discussion of the subjects involved in his present visit," he felt it right to refer to some collateral topics. First, he made grateful acknowledgments to the various societies in England which had aided evangelical exertion in Jamaica. Next he adverted to a passage in a despatch of Sir Charles (since Lord) Metcalfe, then governor of Jamaica, in which that functionary had given a somewhat unfavourable opinion of the baptist missionaries. Of this matter I must take some notice.

Sir Charles Metcalfe had gone as governor to Jamaica in the autumn of 1839, and about three weeks after his arrival, he had sent home a despatch containing his general views of the state of the island. Among the papers laid before parliament early in 1840 this despatch was published, and on its arrival in Jamaica, where it made its appearance just after Knibb's departure, it created no small sensation among the baptist missionaries. They wrote a joint letter, calling upon the governor to produce the evidence on which his opinion was founded, they reiterated this demand in resolutions passed at public meetings, and they requested Knibb to make the despatch a topic of appeal in England. He received these letters a few days after his arrival, and immediately acted on them. Before I make such extracts from his speech at Exeter Hall as may appear necessary, I give the words employed by Sir Charles Metcalfe:—

"It seems undeniable," writes Sir Charles, "that the baptists have pursued a course different from that of all other missionaries, for I hear no reproach uttered against the Wesleyan, Moravian, Presbyterian, or Church of England missionaries; the baptists alone have become a political party, and caused themselves to be regarded as hostile to the proprietary interests. From the partisanship which they have evinced, they have, it may be presumed, greater influence than any other sect in this island, and they are preparing, I am informed, to influence the elections on a dissolution of the Assembly, when such of the emancipated population as may be duly qualified will become entitled to vote. If the political power exercised by the baptists be an evil—and I am disposed, generally speaking, to think that it is an evil whenever the ministers of religion deviate from their purely religious functions, to take a part in the strife and broils of political parties—it is an evil which does not admit of any present remedy. Either their influence will diminish, from their flocks not liking to pay the amount requisite for the support of their church establishments, or it will continue to increase by the activity of the baptists drawing more into their fold. In the latter case, whether their influence be a bane or a blessing to the country must depend on the spirit in which it is exercised."

So far Sir C. Metcalfe. Let the reader now hear Knibb:—

"Before I proceed to the discussion of those topics in which the present, the future, and the eternal welfare of Jamaica are concerned, it is necesrary for me briefly to advert to the numerous and continued slanders which have been cast on the agents of this society. I should not have adverted to this subject at all—I should have considered it beneath my notice, and wholly unworthy of taking up your time, had not these charges been reiterated lately by the present governor of the island of Jamaica. When charges of this kind are made in official documents published by parliament I feel intensely on the subject. Is it to be endured that eighteen days' experience in Jamaica is to throw into the shade the records of governors, who after the strictest scrutiny, have paid the meed of praise my brethren deserve? Is it to be endured, after fifteen years' hard toil in Jamaica, that it is to be asserted by Sir C. Metcalfe that the baptist missionaries have visited the colony from political motives? If these things be true, scout us from your mission; if they be false, make Sir Charles Metcalfe retract the assertion. I am well aware that the utmost respect is due to the constituted authorities, and I do respect them; but I have respect also for myself, and for my beloved brethren abroad. If they wish to be respected, they must act in a respectable manner. I do designate that despatch as unfounded in fact. I claim for my brethren in Jamaica a right to be heard at the colonial office in defence. If the respect due to Sir Charles Metcalfe prevents the full expression of those feelings which would otherwise be manifested, respect to ourselves demands a fair measure of Christian rebuke. He had no right at such a crisis as was then taking place, without having first examined the subject for himself, to take for true all that the partisans by whom he was surrounded chose to say about us. He had before him the despatches of Sir Lionel Smith; he had before him the testimony of the Marquis of Sligo, and that of the Earl of Mulgrave, to the general rectitude of our conduct. Are we then to be sacrificed, just because he chose to think that the power we exercised was not for the welfare, but for the ill-being of society? It is for the honoured committee to whom I belong, and for those by whom I am surrounded, to say whether their missionaries shall be traduced unjustly or not. Are protestant dissenters to be frightened by the bugbear of political expediency? Do you call yourselves the followers of Luther, and of those who, in Smithfield, ascended in their fiery chariots to heaven, and will you allow a company of poor despised missionaries—men of iron—no, not of iron—men of strength and nervous hearts, who are determined, if you should forsake them, that they will never forsake the negro—will you allow them, just because it may not be exceedingly palatable to, Sir Charles Metcalfe to retract his words at the colonial-office, and to say that he sent forth to the world that which was not true, to lie under the odium of sacrificing the welfare of the people we love?"

Accustomed as the baptist missionaries had been to the warm approval, it is not too much to say, to the high encomiums of successive governors, it is scarcely to be wondered at that they should have been somewhat sensitive under the touch of Sir Charles Metcalfe, and their proceedings under the influence of their excited feelings may without difficulty be excused; yet it must be admitted, I think, that they adopted a mistaken course. It can hardly be expected that an official functionary will enter into personal controversy with every one concerning whom it may be his duty to express an opinion to the government, or that the government shall, at the call of a public meeting, or at the sight of an advertisement, proceed to make a subordinate officer retract his words. If the missionaries had contented themselves with a letter to the governor, expressing their hope and belief, that when he should have become better acquainted with them, his views would approximate more nearly to those entertained by his predecessors; and with a memorial to the government at home, rectifying the misrepresentation of which they thought they had reason to complain, they would have been entitled to respect, and might have done themselves some service. As it was, no notice whatever was taken of this matter at the colonial-office, unless (which is probable enough) its effect may be traced in the reduced influence which Knibb soon found he had there, and in the positive refusal of Lord John Russell, who was then in the cabinet, even to see him.

For my own part, I confess that I think the reference made by Sir Charles Metcalfe to the baptist missionaries should not have been so hard to bear. It needs only to be translated from colonial into vernacular English, in order to constitute the highest eulogy which could have been conferred upon them. From the first the planters had denounced any interference with slavery as a meddling with politics, and it was in this respect, and in this respect alone, that the baptist missionaries had been political,—on this point they had been so much of one mind, that it might truly be said they formed (in planter phrase) "a political party"—while certainly for no other cause had they ever been regarded as "hostile to the proprietary interests." The despatch, then, rightly understood, was nothing more than an official testimony to the fact, that the baptist missionaries had been as a body the unflinching opponents of slavery, a fact which is their imperishable honour. If there were any parties who ought to have regarded the document with mortification, they were "the Wesleyan, Moravian, Presbyterian, and Church of England missionaries," who, according to this high authority, were not entitled to similar praise.

After some rapid glances at topics by which I need not here be detained, Knibb proceeded to give his view of the results of freedom. This was at the time a subject of much interest. The experiment of emancipation was unquestionably a great one, perhaps the greatest ever tried by any government on any people, and it had been tried in the face of many frightful prognostications, sometimes affecting with fear not a few of the abolitionists themselves; its issue, therefore, was looked to with deep anxiety, more or less relieved by hope, according to the temperament of the individual. It was difficult, however, if not impossible, to say what the issue really was. The most contradictory statements were abroad in relation to it. Under these circumstances it was deemed peculiarly felicitous that a person from the spot, and one fully acquainted with the facts of the case, should appear before the British public; and Knibb's statement was consequently regarded as of considerable importance. It was as follows:—

"I should not on the present occasion refer at all to the working of the system in the Island of Jamaica, were it not that I think it due to myself, and to my brethren and sisters in Jamaica, as we have been foremost in the battle, and cannot recede, (we do not wish to recede), and as we are determined with Christian weapons to fight our way through, that this Christian assembly should have laid before it the actual state of the population. Before I left Jamaica I publicly challenged a denial of the statements I should make, and that challenge I now repeat. If Peter Borthwick chooses to come, I will meet him. It matters not to me who stands forth. Firm in the consciousness of truth, I challenge contradiction; and I defy the severest scrutiny to detect error.

"I know it is asserted, and truly asserted, that there has been a diminution of the cultivation of the staple produce of the island; but when Christians know the real state of the matter, I feel convinced they will regard this as a blessing, and not as a curse. I should like to know if any man conversant with the history of Ireland thinks her children benefited because they eat not the pork they rear? I should like to know if her happiness is to be weighed by her exports? I should not have touched on this point had not two things been coupled together, and had it not been asserted that a diminution of the produce was a proof of the idleness of the Africans. These two things are as distinct as it is possible for them to be. I delight in being able to read the testimony of an esteemed brother with whom I was once at variance on the subject of emancipation, the Rev. George Blyth, on this point. He says, 'Instead of accusing the labourers of indolence, I am rather disposed to blame them for being too anxious to make money. I do not know a healthy person in the congregation who can justly be called idle.' There are many circumstances contributing to the diminution of colonial produce. If the planters choose to risk their property in the hands of idle men, I ask that you should blame the right persons. I should like to know if any farmer in England could go to a dance at the Opera, employ one person at £500 per year, another at £300, and others at £70, to attend to his grounds, and then expect more than 100 per cent.? There is no soil in the world can do it, and Jamaica cannot do it.

"But there has been a determination to crush the peasantry, and that we have resisted. We have determined to prevent pauperism, if we can; and—let Christians hear it, and admire the grace, and adore the Author—there is not a pauper in Jamaica among the lately emancipated negroes in connexion with our churches; and I have no doubt this may be said of the churches of my esteemed brethren of other denominations. In the parish in which I reside, it was asserted at the last vestry meeting that since the abolition of slavery the poor-rates had been doubled. I knew the inference that was intended to be drawn from this. I went to a vestryman, to whom I said, 'You have told us part of the truth, now tell me the whole. How many blacks who were once slaves are there amongst the paupers?' What was the reply? 'O, not one.' We have at the present moment, in order to satisfy the West Indians' thirst for sugar, to send to Cuba for cattle, to America for flour, and to England for potatoes, which, at 8*s.* per cwt., are cheaper than we can grow yams. Can you expect that Jamaica is always to be the outpouring of wealth? Are we not to have any comforts there?

"There is another circumstance. Many of our black brethren think that they may as well be masters as servants. They have got the idea into their heads that it is as well to have a settlement of their own, as to live in places from which they could be kicked out, at the will of a drunken overseer, at any time. It is not wonderful that they should think so; nor is it astonishing that the baptist missionaries should get such a thing in their head, and teach it to others. I had a member of the name of Hamilton, who the moment he was made free, set up for himself, and became a road-maker. He took a contract, and paid his work-people 10*d.* per day more than the whites said their labour was worth. I made out his accounts; he brought me the money, and when he had paid his men one shilling and eightpence a day, he himself cleared 12*s.* sterling per day for his work. Would he have been a wise man if he had continued working for a master at a shilling per day, when he could get 12*s.* by working on his own account?

"The fallacy of the planters saying that the baptist missionaries settle the wages is most egregious. They settled it themselves. This was one of the few blessings—and they were very few—that the apprenticeship gave us. During the time of the apprenticeship a number of persons came to be valued. The masters universally came down, and deposed on oath to their value, and that fixed their wages. We saw how it was going on, and what would be the result. Let the planters deny it if they can. We have their words, deposing on God's eternal truth, that the labour of apprentices was worth so much ; and can you suppose that when the people were free it was of less worth than when they were slaves ? Was it an unnatural deduction for the men to make, that if their masters thought their labour worth so much a day, when the men wished permission to work for themselves, the men ought to receive an equal sum now that they worked for the master ? Not to insist on this, however, and determined not to overstep the bounds of prudence, fearing also lest those wages might have been rather too high, it was my happiness, in connexion with an estate of a gentleman in London on which my brother Barrett has lived nearly all his life, to make the first settlement of wages at two-thirds of what they said it was worth. The leading cause of the diminution of colonial produce is this, the women stop at home, and the children go to school. It has been asserted that the baptist missionaries use their influence to prevent the people from working. We have recommended the children to be sent to school. Did we do right or wrong ? Is it not honourable to my emancipated black brethren, that they keep their wives at home to take care of their children ? We do not weigh liberty in pounds of sugar, or measure it in gills of rum. We weigh liberty in far higher scales than these. We see in that beautiful, that godlike change which has taken place in Jamaica, the development of the human mind, the reciprocal feelings of affection sweetly intermingling with each other; and while we behold a contented and delighted peasantry, it matters little to us from whence the sugar comes.

"But I must pass from this subject. There are yet brighter triumphs, there are more exalted scenes, which your happy thoughts may visit, but which it has been my privilege to behold. It was supposed by many of our Christian brethren, and sometimes the suspicion would come over ourselves, that when the negro was relieved from his bondage, the holy principles of Christianity would not be sufficient to keep him in the course he should pursue. But what is the fact? When the apprenticeship came our chapels were in ruins, and our people were scattered; but such is their attachment to the house of God, and such their delight in his ordinances, that where only eleven small chapels stood, twenty large ones have been erected. Every chapel that was destroyed by the riots has, by the blessing of God, been replaced by one twice its size. Not only is this the case, but most of them have been paid for by that voluntary principle which is said to be going down. I am happy to inform you that I need now only your prayers. You kindly as a society supported me when my brethren were in bondage, but they determined, that the moment they were free, they would take the delightful work on themselves. This was brought as a charge against me in Jamaica, as a reason why I should be tried; upon which the chief-justice remarked, 'I wish that all Christian denominations would do as Mr. Knibb's does,' that is, support their pastor, and pay for their place of worship. The fact is, that since my return to Jamaica, we have erected three chapels, two school-houses, and a mission-house, connected with my own church, at a cost of about £18,000 currency, and we have paid it all. It is a delightful fact that they now support me. Some Christians think that we are supported too well, but our negro congregations have rather a different view of what a minister should have to what some persons take. They do not consider that a man who spends his life for them has too much, if he has every comfort they can afford him. Long may they think so, and long may they have men worthy of being so thought of. The church with which I am connected not only supports me, but a beloved brother missionary, and we want a third. We will support him. We also support seven school-masters and mistresses. We have sent £100 to the Anti-Slavery Society, and we intend to send that amount annually, so long as slavery exists. They have also subscribed to pay my expenses in coming home. But, perhaps, some one will say, 'Your churches are rich.' They are not; I do not believe that we have six persons who are worth £100 each. How then do they give the money? They all of them give it cheerfully, and this is the way we get it. On the 1st of August last I called the people together. I stated that I thought some bad laws were about to be made, that we owed a thousand pounds, and that we had better pay it off; and then, if they were passed, I would go to England, and see if I could not get them abolished. They brought £1,350 in two or three days; we paid all our debts, and here I am sent home at their expense. Is this the case merely with myself? No. In a few years most of our missionaries will be supported by their own congregations. You supposed that by the abolition of slavery we should lose part of our converts. Take the result: in 1831 we had twenty-four churches, containing 10,838 members, 17,000 inquirers. In 1839, notwithstanding all our deaths and painful exclusions—though not equal to yours—we had thirty-nine churches, containing 24,777 members, 21,111 inquirers. Freedom, in ten years, has doubled the triumphs of mercy. In the time of slavery we had throughout our churches but one or two schools for the instruction of the young. Colonial slavery forbade the instruction of the rising race; it laid a veto on everything intended for the improvement of the mind. Now we have 5,203 children in the day-schools, 645 in the evening-schools, 9,159 in the sabbath-schools; and other denominations are as successful as ourselves.

"Perhaps you will inquire how the improvement of society is discovered. It is to be seen in the diminution of crime. In the community in which I dwell, and which is pre-eminently a community of baptist agitators, there are 125,000 individuals. At the last assizes only nineteen were tried. Let us dissect them—six of them were white men, three were acquitted of the crimes laid to their charge, and there was not a female delinquent among the whole. In the parish in which I live, containing 30,000 individuals, at the last quarter-sessions only one person was tried. And when that inestimable man, Mr. Gurney, visited the jail at Falmouth, he found only one person in it, and that was a white man. When I went to the treadmill—for I have been there, and some have said I deserved to go there every day—I asked permission to go upon it, but the supervisor said, 'Mr. Knibb, it is of no use; it is rusty. The fact is, that ever since the first of August, 1838, we never have been able to muster enough hands to turn it, and down it must come.' And, I say, Down let it come. When the treadmill was erected, I stood by the custos of the parish, who said, 'Mr. Knibb, don't you think we shall improve the morals of the people by the mill?' 'No,' I replied; 'if you have any old gouty gentlemen, it might improve their legs;' but it did not enter into my theology that the exercise of the treadmill would promote the morality of the people. In the parish of St. Ann's, where my brother Abbott lives—and he is an agitator, and a chief agitator too—to such a pitch of refinement have we got, that the jail has been shut up for six months, and the jailer is pensioned off till he is wanted again. The last time I was here I informed you that in Westmorland a deacon was flogged for praying; on passing over that scene of cruelty some time ago, I found it entirely grown over with thorns. The place is no longer wanted; it is shut up, and the keeper is paid off. Out of 24,776 members and inquirers in the Western Union, there has been only one person brought to the bar of his country for crime since freedom came, and he was acquitted. Are not these delightful facts? Are not these triumphant refutations? Let these facts be sent throughout England. I mentioned them in the city of Kingston when the mayor was in the chair. I stated these to be incontrovertible facts; and the next day I sent a challenge through the newspapers that I would meet any gentleman that could contradict them. Blessings like these not only demand our grateful thanksgivings, but they ought at the same time to urge us forward to yet more energetic enterprise in the work in which we have engaged."

Having thus glowingly exhibited the results of emancipation, he made his appeal for the enlargement of the mission in Jamaica:—

"You have heard of the missionary enterprise of our beloved Williams. The honoured society to which he belonged nobly responded to his call. He gathered his mantle around him, and he shed his blood for the people he loved. You have heard of the devotedness of Pearce. He came here to assert his claims which India had upon you, and you nobly responded to the call. You girded yourselves with new strength; the timid forgot their timidity, and urged on by a faithful spirit, they determined on a fresh consecration to the cause of Jesus. We stand in Jamaica in the same position we occupied when we had but 5,000 members, and now we have 24,000; do you suppose that our constitutions are of such an iron make that they can stand this work in the churches of that land? On receiving your last circular, I found I had nearly as many persons in connexion with my church as the whole of the London Baptist Association. If you have enough to do, have not we too much? In forty-six churches in one of the midland counties, I find there are forty-six ministers employed, and their increase is not equal to that which has occurred in the church of the individual who is now earnestly pleading for help. Remember, if you refuse help till we die, it will take years of toil for others before they can obtain the experience they might avail themselves of if sent out now. I do not say this from any feeling of self-aggrandisement, but I feel impelled by imperative duty to urge you to give us ten men, without any delay. We will support five of them at once; and I have not the least doubt but that in two years we shall support the whole. I trust the committee will respond—respond they must, for I will take no denial. I will then soon return to Jamaica, and you shall hear that I am there in the midst of the people I love."

For the projected mission to Africa he pleaded with his utmost pathos. He said:—

"When I stood here eight years ago, I stated that the great object I had in view in endeavouring to obtain the emancipation of my brethren in Jamaica, was the introduction of the gospel of Jesus Christ into the land of their fathers. It would have argued more strongly than the repeated calumnies that have been alleged against the reality of the religion of my beloved brethren and sisters in Jamaica, if they had not felt what they do feel on behalf of the natives of Africa. You have not the least conception of the intensity of feeling they manifest on this all-important subject. It would, as brother Barrett said, do your hearts good to go and see them, and would make you empty all your pockets. Not only are they willing to give their money, but they are anxious that men should be provided for the work. The Christian church will have to learn a new lesson; she will have to find out that men who can speak of Jesus will do for the enterprise. We want cultivated men to carry on some departments, I know; but there are men who simply feel the love of Christ in their hearts, and they can talk of that love to others. 'I, if I be lifted up, will draw all men unto me.' I am more than ever convinced, that the simple exhibition of the cross of Christ is the great means for the renovation of the world. I should consider myself guilty if I threw the least shade on other departments, but we must come to this conclusion, that the object which the missionary has in view is to get every member of his church, in the strength of love, to tell what he knows of the love of God. It is such men as those you see before you who have done the work in Jamaica. They have gone from house to house; they have, unsolicited and unpaid, wandered through the remotest parts of this land. I do not say that they could do without us, but what I have stated is only a just tribute to their moral and spiritual worth. Am I to be told that they must learn Latin and Greek before they go to Africa? It might be well that one conversant with those languages should go with them; but we have some who know what many philosophers do not know—that Jesus died to save them. They will go up the Niger, and pass through villages into which we cannot enter. Do you suppose that God cannot bless them? I know that he can—I know that he will—I know that he has. If you want to see a missionary in his real character, you must divest yourself of your own. It is a delightful fact, that while you have been debating in your committee-room as to the propriety of sending out these men—while you have been afraid that the guilty murderer would catch them, and again make them slaves—while you have been solicitous about the body, they have been borne forth by the energy of their souls. After August, 1838, a black brother in connexion with Mr. Gardner's church sold what he possessed, left the wife of his bosom for two years, bought a few clothes, and worked his passage out to Africa. He is on the spot from whence he was stolen, proclaiming salvation through the blood of the Lamb. You honour, and justly honour, such men as Williams and Pearce; you are surrounded by the sainted spirits of Carey and Morrison; and because Keith is black will you forget him? There are openings of usefulness in Africa of which you have not the most faint conception. I hope some of you will go there and see them, and bless the wonder-working power of God. Let God have all the glory and all the praise. By a recent decision of her majesty's government, the slave-ships which used to be captured and sent to Cuba, where the poor Africans were still made slaves, are now sent to us. In an official communication which I have received from the individual who is appointed by government to parcel them out, he says, 'If you or your society want men from whom you may learn the language, you shall have the pick of every ship that comes in.' And do you think that we shall wait till we have your permission to do it? No, we have done it. I have in my house at the present time a most interesting young man from Gouna, on the borders of Lake Shad. He was selling commodities on the Niger when he was taken. He was brought to Montego Bay. He knows much of the upper part of that mighty river. You might have seen that African, who six months before was in the wilds of his native country, taking into his lap the child of a missionary to learn to say his A. B. C. He is a Mohammedan by birth and by profession; but I am confident they have taken up with that religion because Christians have not sent them a better. I have other delightful facts to mention. It was but the other day that the son of one of the largest slave-dealers in Africa came to me. He is a most intelligent young man, and a Christian. He was sent by his father to Cuba, in a slave-vessel which was captured by a British cruiser. He was taken to Bermuda, and finding that his rank was gone, he enlisted into the army. He heard the sound of the gospel from one of your missionaries, he became a decided Christian, and he asks you, as he asks me, to send him back to Africa with others. I have heard him say, 'I will then tell my father not to sell his countrymen any more.' So convinced was Sir Lionel Smith that he was the son of King Bel of Africa, that he offered him to us, whenever we could send him out. I called together the Africans of the churches of Kingston who felt interested in Africa. Between twenty and thirty assembled, and, mentioning the objects I had in view, one of them said, 'I will go as your shoe-black, if you will take me.' I asked him when he would be ready to go. 'To-morrow,' was his reply. I said to them, 'Perhaps you would be made slaves if you were to go.' What was their answer? 'We have been made slaves for men, we can be made slaves for Christ.' These are the men that ought to go, and whether you send them or not, go they will. But they love you; they do not wish to be dissevered from you; they wish to gather round them your sympathies. As they have hitherto received from your piety all they have attained, perhaps your will inquire what are they doing? We have commenced a small academy. I hope we shall not spoil them. I am sometimes half afraid of it. Mr. Tinson is devoting part of his time to the instruction of six young men in this academy, and there are circumstances connected with it which cannot fail to afford you gratification.

"I come in the name of 50,000 baptists who want their fatherland to receive the gospel. First, I plead with my brethren in the ministry. I would identify myself with you. I ask you to think of Africa's wrongs; this country has robbed, and peeled, and destroyed her. In the West India islands during the last two centuries, there have been 30,000,000 of Africans landed. As there is only half a million living there at the present time, the money which has been spent for those who have been murdered would pay the national debt. If you refuse us the needful help where will you be at the judgment-day? The scene of labour is open before you, and there are men ready to go. You tell us you have not the money. You have it, and, if you do not bestow it, God may take it away. We do not ask you for your lives; we are willing to give our own. Go to your congregations—go to them in the spirit of prayer; tell them that we long to heal Africa's wounds—that it wants the balm of Gilead, and it must at once be bestowed. Will you, my brethren in the ministry, deny me this one request, the introduction of the gospel into Africa? Will you not make the experiment in the strength of Omnipotence, in the power of God! You never know your difficulties till you get into the field; it is useless to sit down here and talk about them. Go to the field, discover them, and God will enable you to overcome them. I call upon the deacons of our churches. I ask you for your influence, for your prayers. I plead for 200,000,000 of Africans, almost entirely destitute of the knowledge of Jesus Christ. I call on the members of Christian churches. I call not on the world. I do not want the world to touch this ark. I say the church of Jesus Christ can do it, and ought to do it. Let us begin. I will pledge my church to £1000, and I will get it in a week. I will pledge Mr. Dendy's church for £500 or £600, and he will get it in a few days. I will send to Jamaica, and I am sure we shall get our money as soon as you get yours. Let each Christian, instead of giving his guinea, give £5. If you are the worse for it at the year's end, we will return you the money. I call upon mothers. It has been said by one, that those who rock the cradle rule the world. I once had a beloved mother, and when I went to Jamaica she said, 'William, remember that your mother would rather hear of your being sunk in the sea, than of your disgracing the missionary cause.' She felt it to be her honour that she should have one child lying dead in Jamaica, and another there alive. O, Christian mothers, do not forbear to deliver your children to the work. Do not call it sacrifice. The only sacrifice I have ever found in the missionary field is the death of my dear children. I once had a boy; I took him to a slave-ship, and I made him vow eternal enmity to the system, while he beheld an African in the agonies of death. He promised fair; he promised me the week before he died, that if he lived he would go to Africa. I thought my cup of happiness was full; but the angel of the Lord took him to heaven. If I have any wish for my children, it is that they may be missionaries. I would rather that they died in Africa, than change places with the illustrious female who fills the British throne. I do not say this to gain applause; I say it from a firm conviction of the extent, the grandeur, and the value of the missionary work. Had I ten thousand lives, I would spend them all in this cause. Do not talk of missionary sacrifices; I know not what they are.

'Sacrifice He gave who died for me,
And all I have shall be his own.'

Are there no young men who will come forward? Williams is in heaven; Pearce is in heaven; Coultart is in heaven; together with a large missionary band. Will you not share in the conflict? You will have your trials, but you will have your blessings too. And, now, what more shall I say?"*

It was not necessary that he should say any thing more. The feelings of the meeting were enthusiastically with him, and his object was gained. He did not conclude his address, however, with this topic; he had reserved for this place the subject of American slavery, which he treated in his most powerful manner. It is deeply affecting now to recall him as uttering at that meeting the following words:—

"When I last appeared before you, I took a solemn vow at the altar of eternal mercy, that in the strength of God,—and that has been given to me, and without one muscle relaxed I have returned among you—I would never cease till I had smitten this chain from my brethren. And since that object has been effected, in the strength of the Divine Being I have made another resolve, that if you will aid us by your sympathies, and your prayers, and your exertions, we will never rest until America is freed from her foulest stain."

---

* At this meeting Knibb related the following circumstance:—"At Montego Bay I saw two little girls landed from a slave-ship, and I asked permission to take them. I never shall forget their feeling; they thought I was a slave-owner, and they wept bitterly when I took hold of them. If ever I felt myself shrink beneath my manhood, if ever I felt my flesh creep on my bones, if ever I felt myself covered with loathsome moral disease, it was when these poor Africans could think that I would steal or ill-use them. I soon dissipated their fears. I placed them by the side of my own children, and told them to go hand in hand. I put them all in a vehicle we have, and drove them through the town; and I never felt a prouder moment in my life. And where are they now? In the missionary school, and there shall they stop. When I left Jamaica, they wept as bitterly as any with whom I parted."

If "the Lord knoweth the thoughts of the wise," he knoweth not less the purposes of the noble, "that they are vain." What might have arisen from a visit of Knibb's to the United States cannot be conjectured. There were some who thought it not improbable that he might contribute to the overthrow of slavery there, but such was not his destiny. He was not permitted even to set his foot on the continent of America.

On the 28th of May Knibb had an interview with the committee, and entered at large into the statement of his case. The objects he strove to attain were two, an enlargement of the missionary staff in Jamaica, and the commencement of a mission to Western Africa. Both points he carried. The same day the committee recorded their sentiments on the first in the following terms :—

> "That the committee have listened with great interest to the statements laid before them by Mr. Knibb; that they concur in the sentiments he has expressed in relation to the importance of strengthening our mission in Jamaica, and are convinced of the duty of taking prompt and energetic measures to send out ten additional missionaries."

A resolution on the second was adopted on the 3rd of June, after the following tenor :—

> "That, in compliance with the representations of our brethren in Jamaica, and following what we apprehend to be the clear indications of Providence, we determine, in reliance on the divine blessing, to commence a mission to Western Africa."

In order to provide the pecuniary resources demanded by these exertions, it was agreed that Knibb, in connexion with other brethren, should make an appeal to the friends of the society at large. Accordingly, from the date of this meeting till November, when he returned to Jamaica, he was engaged in an incessant round of public engagements, in various parts of the country. A few extracts from his correspondence during this period will be interesting.

In one of his early journeys he passed through Kettering; and a subsequent letter to his wife, dated London, July 21st, contains the following hurried reference to the gush of filial and parental feeling which burst forth there:—"Visited the grave of our dear Andrew, but it was too much for me. Dear little fellow! Well, he is safe in heaven. Went to mother's grave. O, she sweetly sleeps in Jesus."

I insert the following extracts without comment:—

TO HIS WIFE.

"*Ipswich, July* 5, 1840.

"I sent out last packet to brother Dendy a copy of a letter I had received from the colonial office respecting the laws of Jamaica. I have since heard that they will not be allowed, unless much altered. I hope that we shall at length succeed, though the tide is evidently very much against us at Downing Street. I shall be sincerely thankful when the time comes for my return. I do not wish to be repining, as I humbly hope God is making some use of me to promote the kingdom of his Son. O how happy should we be, could we always live near to him!"

TO THE SAME.

"*July* 27, 1840.

"I have had hard work with the committee about the African mission, but I am determined to push it. It is very popular in the country and among the churches, and I hope that eventually I shall succeed.

"I assure you it is no easy thing to stem the tide against us, but I am working hard to do so. The ministry is decidedly unfavourable. The enormous price of sugar is laid on our shoulders, missionaries of other societies are misrepresenting our churches and our views, and often, often do I sigh for a calm retreat in Jamaica; but I feel, notwithstanding all, that I am in the path of duty, and I hope still to be sustained in that path by a kind and gracious God. My great grief is that I live not nearer to God, and the fear lest the dear people of my charge should make shipwreck of faith.

"Dendy hints at the probability of the militia being re-organized. I hope that some brethren will dissuade the members of our churches from enlisting or being enlisted. War is entirely opposed to Christianity, and I should much like to see the principle carried out in our churches, if they think as I do on this important subject."

TO THE SAME.

"*London, July* 30, 1840.

"We have a very chilly summer, and I have a sad cold, from which I cannot obtain relief, but it does not incapacitate me from performing a portion of the duties which are daily pressed upon me.

"I assure you, my dear girl, that I am often cast down by reason of the many difficulties thrown in my way, not only by open foes, but by professed Christians; and though I have a most hearty welcome, yet I sigh for the regular duties of the ministry. Mr. ——, and a returned Scotch school-master, I believe from ————, are doing us all the mischief that they can. Instead of now wondering that the society can do no more, I wonder that, with all these conflicting statements, they can do so much, or do not at times sink into despair. Well, if the whole is to lead to greater simplicity of aim, to more devotedness of heart, to deeper humility in the sight of God, it will be among the 'all things' that work together for good; but I assure you, at present, it is hard work to stem the tide. The government are most decidedly against us, but I still hope that God is on our side, and that he will yet condescend to bless us."

TO THE SAME.

"*Ramsgate, August* 17, 1840.

"My heart has been poured out in prayer for you, the dear children, and the church, this morning, But O with what dulness, compared with what I ought and long to feel! Satan has been busy with my evil heart, and has been tempting me to give up my work in despair. Oh, it has been a time of trial; but I will, I must, cling to the cross, and I would hope that the light of God's countenance will again shine upon me. It is a sweet relief to have one on earth to whom I can unbosom my heart, for the utterance of feeling gives ease to the sufferer; but what a mercy to be invited to the cross, to be permitted there to spread our sorrows, under the assurance that there is a compassionate Saviour to receive them! Well, I hope we shall spend an eternity in his presence, where there is fulness of joy. There, there alone, perfect happiness dwells.

"I requested Mr. Dendy by last packet to enclose letters from Scotland respecting charges preferred against me by a Mr. Black. I suppose he has shown them to you. I have written to the party for specific acts of oppression, otherwise I shall not take any notice of the charges. The church can do as it pleases. You can have no idea of the attempts made to crush us in England, and of the never-ceasing activity with which we are assailed. I hope I am in the path of duty; but, had I known fully the state of feeling, I should have trembled to undertake the matter. If, however, my Heavenly Father will accept my sincere desire to serve him, I shall be amply repaid. It was quite needful for some one to be here, and perhaps as well for me as for any one else. I have been urged to stay till the spring, but this I shall not accede to, as I consider myself pledged to the people, and to you, to return."

TO THE SAME.

"*Cheltenham, September* 27, 1840.

"I am prevented from reaching my destination, which is Bourton-on-the-Water, where I was to have preached, and I employ a portion of this sacred day in addressing you. O that I could enter fully into its sweetness, and catch the heavenly spirit

I long to breathe! The past has been a week of almost incessant toil, mingled with many mercies, for which I desire to be truly thankful. I should be completely happy, could I but live nearer to God. The bustle of these continued meetings is an uncongenial soil for personal religion, and yet I do hope that I am not altogether without its sacred influences. No packet has arrived, and my mind is filled with anxiety about you, the dear children, and the church; yet why not commend it all to God? He must and he will do right, and in his own time we shall see that he has done so."

TO MR. DEXTER.

"*October* 2, 1840.

"I am duly in the receipt of yours, and am much obliged by your kind sympathy and prayers. It has been a toiling visit, but my Heavenly Father has, of his infinite mercy, abundantly blessed me. I am often so weary that I know not what to do, but hitherto strength has been given equal to my day. O that I could sufficiently thank that God to whom all the glory belongs! 'Well,' you will say, 'and what is the result?' Prejudice of no ordinary kind has been repressed; the people have been defended in almost every large city; the African mission has been formed, and two brethren sail for the Niger ere this reaches you; three are engaged for Jamaica, and six others are preparing to enter on the glorious work; £1500 has been raised towards their outfits, £1000 for Africa, and several hundreds for the general purposes of the mission; and four females are engaged as teachers, whom I hope God will abundantly bless. Well, it is a mercy thus in the least degree to be made useful. But how much greater to be enabled to believe that my name is in the Lamb's book of life!

'There, there, unshaken would I rest,
Till this vile body dies;
And then on faith's triumphant wings,
At once to glory rise.'

"I exceedingly regret to hear of the quarrelling in ——— church. Give my most affectionate love to them, and tell them that I hope they will cultivate a spirit of prayer and a spirit of liberality, and that God may in mercy forgive and bless them. I shall hope, ere I reach them, to hear that they have made a good collection towards the institution at Calabar. Tell them that the eyes of the whole world are upon them, and that upon their conduct it depends whether their enslaved fellow countrymen in America be made free, or still held in slavery. They have a noble opportunity of exemplifying the power of godliness to the world. May God in his mercy enable them still to put to silence those who long for their destruction !"

TO HIS WIFE.

"*Haverfordwest, October* 4, 1840.

"Well, now for the news. I have taken my passage in the Reserve, and expect she will sail at the latest by the 5th of November. I hope, but am not quite certain, that with me will sail four ladies to conduct schools, and four missionaries and their wives. These are as many as the Reserve will carry. I mention it thus early, that our friends may remember us in their supplications at the throne of grace, and that there may be prayer-meetings for our preservation while on the mighty deep. My prayer is, that it may be to me a season of much spiritual enjoyment. I did enjoy much of the presence of God while coming to England, and I hope he will similarly bless me on my return to Jamaica.

"Dr. Prince has been accepted by the committee, to proceed forthwith with brother Clarke to the Niger, and they will both sail in the course of ten or twelve days. O that the rich blessing of God may accompany and bless them on this important mission ! My heart yearns over them, and I hope that prayer without ceasing will be made for them by all the churches of the society in Jamaica.

"When I look at the results of my mission to England, I am both thankful and humbled. O what a condescending being must God be, to employ such an instrument in his service ! I have been in England scarcely five months, and now there is every reason to expect that the laws in Jamaica will be altered—the African mission has been commenced—eight missionaries have been accepted by the society out of the ten for Jamaica—within a few pounds of the money has been raised for their passage and outfit, and I have every prospect, if health is continued, by the blessing of God, of raising the remaining sum required, and of finding the men by the time I have engaged to leave. O, this is a mercy, and God shall have all the glory. How I desire that a successful blow may be aimed against American slavery, and that it may fall, all bloody as it is, before the cross of the Redeemer !"

TO THE SAME.

"*London, October* 18, 1840.

"I arrived last evening in London from Beccles, Yarmouth, and Norwich, at which latter place I saw J. J. Gurney, and dined with him. His *Letters on the West Indies* are just printed, and will do immense good. I go this week to Bristol and Bath, the next to Yorkshire, which will, I expect, finish my tour. Some other day the following list may please you :—Arrived at Liverpool early in May—public meetings and other services held at the Town Hall, Birmingham, London, and its vicinity—from thence to Amersham, public meetings in the open air—from thence to Uxbridge and Staines, to public meetings, when off to Maidstone in Kent—from thence to St. Alban's, and afterwards to Cambridge—journeyed to Kettering on same errand, and returned to London, for Surrey chapel, Camberwell, Meard's Court, Tottenham, John Street, and Freemasons' Hall—concluded at the Quakers' meeting, when off to Birmingham, and concluded on returning to the convention at Exeter Hall—journeyed and held public meetings at Dunstable, Houghton, and Luton, in Bedfordshire, and from thence to Stroud, Shortwood, Wootton-under-Edge, Uley, and Stanley in Gloucestershire, when my route lay in Berkshire ; at Reading, Wokingham, and Newbury, we had large and attentive audiences. Suffolk came next in my way, and at Ipswich, Bury, and Diss, several very good meetings were held, and a visit paid to the venerable Clarkson. Then came Norwich, where good brother Brock resides, and St. Andrew's Hall was crowded to excess, and a good feeling produced. Northampton came next, with Leicester, and Loughborough, when my course was again directed to Birmingham, where several excellent meetings were held—then Waltham Abbey, Dr. Leifchild's in London, Kilburn, and Watford, received me most heartily ; when Gloucestershire and Worcestershire had their share, and a succession of preaching and speaking at Cheltenham, Tewkesbury, Gloucester, Cirencester, Coleford, Pershore, and Worcester was the result. Then Kent came under notice ; at Ramsgate, St. Peter's, Margate, and Canterbury, the friends of missions took a deep interest in Africa. Then came Colchester, and afterwards Portsea, Portsmouth, Southampton, Lymington, and Poole, where we had very fair success. Spared by my Heavenly Father, I proceeded to Hastings, Lewes, Brighton, and

Sevenoaks, where deep interest was felt in the mission. Then came Lancashire, and Yorkshire, with North Wales, and a most delightful month it was. At Warrington, Liverpool, Sheffield, Leeds, Hull, Bradford, Halifax, and Manchester, a series of meetings of the most animating kind were attended, together with others at Ashton-under-Line, Bolton, Salford, and Rochdale, when my ever-moving path led me to Abingdon, Oxford, and back to London, just in time to proceed to Haverfordwest in Wales, where seven hundred sat down to tea—after which, Melksham, Devizes, and Frome, received their share, where poor Tom Jones, refused admittance at his father's house, was, or had been, begging in the streets. Then came Yarmouth, and Beccles, and a return in safety to London—a journey of more than four months' continuance. O for a grateful heart to Him who hath kept and blessed me in this continued round of bustle and activity !"

TO THE SAME.

"*London, October* 23, 1840.

"'Well,' you will say, 'and how did you proceed at Bristol ?' We had, then, first, a public meeting crammed to excess at Counterslip, which has been considerably enlarged. The next morning we had a public breakfast. The young ladies had beautifully decorated the room (King Street school-room) with evergreens and flowers, and two hundred persons sat down to a substantial repast. Over a canopy of laurel they had inscribed, 'Welcome to the negroes' friend.' There I and the ministers were placed. Messrs. Crisp, Winter, and C. E. Birt were there, and altogether it was one of the most interesting meetings I have attended. Here we collected £200. In the afternoon I took tea with the students, and obtained two volunteers as missionaries to Jamaica, one a fiery Welshman. In the evening I addressed the young in Broadmead, which closed the labours of the day. All is bustle now, and preparation. We confidently expect to sail on the 11th, and shall (D. V.) land at Rio Bueno; first your own dear William, then Messrs. Cornford, Woolley, May, and Armstrong, with their wives, Mrs. Bloomfield, Misses Yarnold, Drayton, Anstie, Clark, and Grafty, fifteen in all. I shall try and hoist a white flag, that you may know the vessel. By the help of a kind Providence you may expect us about new year's day. And O may He, in whose service we are embarking, manifest himself richly unto us, and crown our humble efforts with his blessing! O for much of the spirit of prayer to rest upon this attempt to extend the triumphs of the Lamb, and God, even our God, shall have all the glory. Amen and amen."

Throughout the whole of these journeys, in the course of which it was computed that he had, in five months, travelled 6,000 miles, attended 154 public services, and addressed 200,000 persons, the reception of Knibb was more than cordial, it was enthusiastic. The honours won by him in 1832 were still remembered, and they constituted a sort of glowing atmosphere for his re-appearance. It was as though the sun, having set in glory, had risen again before the crimson tints of the west had departed. His progress through the country resembled less a journey of business than a triumphal procession.

Under these circumstances it is a matter of great happiness to be furnished with proof that his habits of personal piety did not suffer, and to know that he still walked humbly with God. The information I possess on this subject is derived from a letter communicated to me by R. B. Sherring, Esq., of Bristol, of the tenor and value of which I will at once enable the reader to judge. I cannot state either by whom or to whom it was written :—

"*Keynsham, February* 19, 1845.

"On the morning of the 22nd of October, 1840, after the public breakfast at Bristol, as we left the school-room, I was walking near him, but did not know he saw me. Several persons, and some of the more wealthy rank, were pressing him to return with them either to dinner or lunch, but he politely declined, saying his time was so short he must attend to business; and, before I was aware, he took hold of me, and saying, 'Come, let you and me have a bit of bread and cheese together,' led me off to your house. You were in the shop, and he said, 'I may bring another, may n't I?'

You replied with one of your jokes, and said, ' Walk up, but I do not think you will find any one there yet.' The lunch was laid in the back parlour, and I went into the other to take off my bonnet. As I was returning I heard him speaking in a suppressed voice, and I seem to hear him now, so indelibly was every sound fixed in memory. I distinctly heard the following words :—' O my Father, suffer none of these things to draw me away from thee ! Let not pride prevail. Keep, O keep me humble. Rather take me from that work which is so dear to me, than suffer me by vanity to disgrace thy cause. Let me never withdraw my heart from thee, to place it on the best of thy servants.' These words were uttered with an earnestness almost amounting to anguish. He ceased ; and, after a moment's pause, I entered. I seem to see him now. His hands covered his eyes, and tears were chasing each other down his cheeks. As soon as he heard me, he hastily wiped them away, and looking up with a sweet smile, he said, ' Ah, my child, these things are hard to bear ; it is more than I expected, and I tremble lest they should draw my soul from God. Oh, it is much harder than it was when I entered Bristol some years ago, and almost every one feared to be seen in my company. That drove the soul to God. Now I enter, and see my name placarded in every direction in the same city, and this tempts me to forget him. Pray for me, that this may never be the case. Oh, how would Satan rejoice could he tempt me to rest upon self ! O my Father, forbid it, forbid it !' Mrs. P. then entered, and we began lunch. After this some remark in commendation of him which had been overlooked was mentioned to him, and he said, ' I wish people would praise me less and pray for me more. This is what I want, that they may never have to grieve over my fall.' Other similar remarks fell from him. I think this interview produced a higher feeling of respect for his character in my mind than any public act could have created."

Knibb's reception on this visit by the anti-slavery party in England was cordial, even to enthusiasm. Immediately on his landing at Liverpool a meeting was convened at the Town Hall, Birmingham, with the avowed object of welcoming him, and of hearing his statement of the results of emancipation. This meeting was held on Tuesday, the 19th of May (a few days after his arrival), Captain Moorsom in the chair; and it is stated to have been one of the most numerous and influential meetings ever held in Birmingham on anti-slavery affairs. Through this assembly, consisting of at least five thousand persons, Knibb introduced to the British public his two coloured friends, Beckford and Barrett, whom he had brought with him as samples of the men who had formerly been slaves, and gave his earliest relation of the effects of freedom. "It is fit," said he, "that one who has witnessed the results of emancipation should make his first report, in a town not more renowned for its manufacturing enterprize than for its opposition to slavery, wherever it is found to exist. When I remember the numerous meetings which have been held in Birmingham on behalf of the slave, and the urgent appeals which have been made by many of those by whom I am surrounded, I feel I am discharging some portion of a debt of gratitude which I can but feebly repay, in laying before you some of those glorious results which have taken place in the island of Jamaica. I am aware," he continued, "that efforts have been made, and will still be made, to impugn the character of my beloved brethren. It has been said that the sacred duties of the Christian ministry have been surrendered for the stormy arena of political discussion. It is easier, however, to make such a charge than to prove it. If to defend the oppressed against the encroachments of arbitrary power—if to watch with untiring anxiety the first breathings of liberty among the inhabitants of the west—if to sympathize with the wretched and the friendless, and to strive by day and night to secure to them those rights of which they ought never to have been deprived—if to succour the infirm and the helpless, when in distress and ready to despair—if to claim for the hard-working peasant a just return for his labour —if to disenthral his mind from the miasma and pollution of slavery, and teach him to appreciate his rights as a man—if to strike from the hands of woman the chain of bondage, and place in its stead the child of her affection, and tell her that her home is her place, and not the unmitigated glare of a burning sun—if these things are political, then I acknowledge that the baptist missionaries of Jamaica have been political." Such an appeal as this would not have been powerless anywhere, but it was particularly well adapted to the meridian of the place where it was uttered, and it was received accordingly with "great applause."

He was received at the Anti-Slavery Convention in a manner not less gratifying than at Birmingham. At its first sitting he was called upon by Mr. Sturge to say a few words, and throughout the convention he acted, not a prominent, but a useful and effective part. The principal value attached to his presence arose, however, from his ability to describe from personal observation the consequences which had followed from the great act of the British legislature, and his statement on this point was copious and satisfactory; but, as it was for substance the same as he had previously made at Exeter Hall, I cannot insert it here without an amount of repetition by which the reader would be wearied.

He was one of the speakers at the first annual meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, which was held on the 24th of June, at Exeter Hall, his royal highness the Duke of Sussex in the chair. His address on this occasion was directed against the oppressive and iniquitous laws, by which the Jamaica legislature were at that time endeavouring to render freedom but another name for slavery. He concluded with these words:—"Let the blind-minded proprietors of Jamaica in this country look to the consequences, if they adhere to the present system. I desire to preserve their estates, and to see them flourishing. But if we cannot have freedom in the valleys, which are still to be subjected to the rule of tyrants, we will have it on the hills, which God has left for the people. I want practical freedom; and I will not rest till I have obtained it." This declaration was responded to by "loud and long-continued cheering."

During the course of this visit to England, he gave utterance to his feelings of pastoral affection by addressing three admirable and characteristic letters to the churches under his care in Jamaica. The first of these was written shortly after his arrival, and is as follows: —

"TO THE CHURCHES AT FALMOUTH, WALDENSIA, AND WILBERFORCE.

"*London, May* 29, 1840.

"MY BELOVED FRIENDS,—Through the medium of my dear brother Dendy, who has for the present the oversight of you in the Lord, I address to you a few lines, that you may learn my affairs, and that we may be mutually comforted by the faith of Jesus Christ. You will have heard how mercifully the Lord preserved us when in danger on the sea, and how he has permitted me to plead on your behalf, and on behalf of Africa, since I have reached the shores of England.

"Nothing, my dear friends, will give me so much pleasure as to hear that you stand fast in the Lord, striving together for the faith of the gospel. This will enable me with cheerfulness to pursue those plans for your present and eternal welfare with which I am entrusted; while, should it be my painful trial to hear the reverse, that there was coldness and deadness in spiritual duties, that the house of God was neglected or but seldom attended, that little real concern was manifested for the extension of the gospel, or little attention given to the instruction of the young, my soul would mourn in secret, and my hands hang down in despair. O let me entreat and implore you to live near to God in private prayer; then will your souls prosper. Let me invite you to an early, constant attendance on the means of grace, then will your profession be adorned, and your Father smile upon you. See to it that the prayer-meetings are well attended; that the instruction of your children is not neglected; that there be no strife, or debate, or wrath, existing among you; but 'be ye kind one to another, tender-hearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.'

"I assure you that I deeply feel the separation from you, even for a season; but I feel that I am in the path of duty, and that while my dear brethren are supplying my lack of service, I am made the instrument of advancing your welfare at home. You can have but little idea of the many things that are said against you, of the many enemies who speak evil of your ministers, and of you for your attachment to the truth. O let me implore you not to give any handle against you by doing what is wrong. Whatever you may yet have to suffer, see to it that you bear it as the followers of the meek and lowly Jesus, that thus, 'by well doing, you may put to silence the ignorance of foolish men.' I am exceedingly anxious to bring out some missionaries with me, and also some young females to conduct schools for the daughters of the members of our churches, so that they may be fitted for schoolmistresses, or for any other station in society to which God may call them. While every attempt is made to destroy you as a people and as a church, let it be your aim, by frequent prayer, and by increased energy and devotedness, to show that your attachment to the blessed gospel is increased, and not diminished, by the efforts which the enemy of souls makes against you. Should I hear those accounts I long to hear, I shall not only rejoice, but shall be prepared to bring out that increased agency which is so essential to your spiritual improvement. O, then, let me entreat you thus to fulfil my joy.

"With much pleasure I inform you that the land of your fathers, Africa, is engaging the attention of the Christian church, and that I have many hopes we soon shall have a mission in that dark and benighted land. O what a theme for your joy, for your prayers, for your efforts! Think of it, pray over it, and act at once as the disciples of Jesus. But I must address you more particularly. To the deacons let me say, cultivate prayer and the reading of the word of God. Be ensamples to the church. Hide no sin, however painful it may be. Urge all to do what they can for the cause of Jesus, and set a proper liberal example. Your character has been much defamed to the committee by ———: see to it, that the propriety of your conduct evinces the falsehood of his wicked assertions. Let me implore you not to give way to anger, either against him or any one else. Let Mr. Dendy know all your feelings and desires. Treat him as a father who loves you. Urge upon all increased devotedness to God, and exemplify the same; then shall my heart rejoice, even mine. I do earnestly pray you all may be found faithful, even unto death.

"To the members of the church let me say, Watch and pray, pray and watch, lest you fall into temptation. As you value an interest in the Saviour, as you hope for eternal life, and expect an entrance into heaven, neglect not private prayer. Live near to God in your cottages. Live as Christian husbands and wives ought to live. Train your children for heaven. Hail sinners to the cross. Try and bring them to God's house, and be sure that you are always found there yourselves. As God has blessed you with freedom, let the world, which is looking upon you, see that you are desirous of improving the blessing, then will you be instrumental in extending the mercies you enjoy, to thousands of your fellow men who are still deprived of the liberty they ought to possess. Be it your aim to glorify God in your bodies and in your spirits, which are his.

"To the inquirers I would say, Follow on to know the Lord. My heart's desire and prayer to God for you is, that you may be saved. You have expressed a desire to be united to the people of God; be it your great concern to be the children of God in reality. Remember that Jesus alone can save you from hell, and take you to heaven. This he is quite willing to do, but not if you live and continue in the practice of sin. Without a holy life and a continued desire to please God, you cannot be the disciples of Jesus. O beware of hypocrisy, or self-righteousness, or self-security; but daily, hourly, look to the blessed Jesus for strength equal to your day. Then shall you know, if you follow on to know the Lord.

"To the dear children of the schools I send my kindest and best wishes. While I would urge upon your parents the duty of sending you to school, I would press upon you the value of instruction, and the pleasures of early piety. O my dear children, give yourselves in early life to God, and your happiness for this world and the next is secure. Beware of telling lies, of breaking the sabbath, of disobedience to parents, of neglect of instruction. If your hearts be wise, my heart shall rejoice, even mine.

"I fully intend, if my Heavenly Father spares me, to see you soon after Christmas. May we meet more holy, more conformed to the will of God, more desirous of promoting his glory; then, my dear friends, we shall meet at length in glory, to spend eternity in the presence of God and the Lamb.

"That this may be our individual portion is the earnest prayer of

"Your affectionate pastor,

"WILLIAM KNIBB."

From the second of these letters, which is dated July 29, I take only the following extract:—

"It is with sincere pain I inform you that many evil reports are still circulated against you and your ministers, and that it is still asserted by some returned missionaries that your conduct is far otherwise than that which becometh the gospel of Christ. Let the effect of this be a closer walk with God, a more habitual sense of his presence, and a more earnest desire to live entirely to his glory. If you should, in any of your class meetings, cloak and hide sin, as I have often faithfully warned you, you will have to answer for it at the day of judgment. Be watchful, be vigilant, for your enemy as a roaring lion goeth about seeking whom he may devour."

Of the third letter I insert nearly the whole. It affords a pleasing example, I think, of his mode of address to his people, when wishing to engage their co-operation in the plans to which he was devoted.

"TO THE CHURCHES IN FALMOUTH, WILBERFORCE, AND WALDENSIA.

"*London, October*, 1840.

"My beloved friends—such I feel you to be, and therefore such I call you. And may God in his mercy grant the love may exist throughout eternity. Amen! Amen!

"I am now contemplating with pleasure the time when I shall again, not with pen and ink, but face to face, hold intercourse with you, and again enjoy such times of refreshment from the presence of the Lord as have been in former days experienced by us. This is the Lord's day, and my mind hovers over the hallowed scenes of this day in Jamaica. Well, God is here. May you too enjoy him, and find him to be your great reward.

"How is it with your souls? Are you striving after conformity to God, to his image? Be assured, my dear flock, that there is no real religion without this. You have been baptized on a personal profession of your faith, you attend the means of grace, you give cheerfully to the cause of God, and all this is right and proper; but it is not the ground of a sinner's hope of heaven. No! If you trust to this you will be lost at last. Your only hope of heaven, as I have often told you, is a simple, daily reliance on the blood of Christ; and the more you feel this the happier you will be, and the holier will you become. Let me, then, as if I were present with you, ask you individually, Do you trust in Christ? Live near to God in prayer. Love his house, and ever be found there. Live for God, as well as to God. Try to win sinners to Jesus. And when you have done all, pray that you may feel that you have done far less than it was your duty to do. O, it is a sweet privilege to love and serve God, to live for his glory, to be one with his cause, and to extend the blessings of his love.

"You are aware that the society to which you owe so much are contemplating a mission to Western Africa, the land from whence some of you, and all your forefathers, were stolen. God appears to smile upon the undertaking. I know you feel an interest in this subject, but I wish it may be more constant, more anxious, more prayerful, and then it must, and will, receive the blessing of God. That merciful Being who has set you free appears in his providence to be opening the way that Africa may receive the gospel of his Son, and we look to you and to your fellow Christians as the agents he will employ. In England the deepest interest is felt in this subject, and I hope it will penetrate every Christian's heart in Jamaica, and never cease to exert a powerful influence, until the land of your fathers receives the gospel of Christ.

"It will be, I am sure, a source of great pleasure to you to learn that I hope to sail with several missionaries and schoolmasters to carry on the work of God around you. This will render it necessary that you devote your substance, with other churches, to his cause; and if I know you, if I have not mistaken your characters, you will freely do it. I have made arrangements that every chapel shall be opened, and have a minister, every Lord's day, and I hope to bring out an efficient schoolmaster to conduct the school at Falmouth, that thus your dear children may have a good education, and be a comfort to you in your old age.

"You are aware, my dear friends, that we have long felt deeply concerned for your children, and especially for your daughters, and we hope to have at least one good school in which they can be trained (at least some of them) to be schoolmistresses. You are all aware that you are not only surrounded by enemies in Jamaica (I could scarcely have believed the wicked falsehoods sent home against you, had I not had to refute them), but you are surrounded too by slaves in other islands, and especially in America. If you continue to conduct yourselves with propriety, and show that now you are free you can support yourselves, pay for the instruction of your children, and extend the gospel in the island, you will be the means, in the hand of God, of imparting freedom to your deeply injured fellow countrymen who are still held in slavery, while you are repaying the debt you owe to those in England who have done so much for you. I hope you will think of these things, talk of them in your prayer meetings and houses, and ask God to give you strength to perform that which is acceptable in his sight.

"By the time this is read to you I shall be sailing back to you, and I here request of you, and of the other churches, that you will meet and pray that the winds and the waves may conduct me safely to you, and that when I come I may find you in the enjoyment of health and happiness, and that my future ministry among you may be abundantly blessed by God.

"I shall try and reach Jamaica by Christmas, and as there will be much to do for the new missionaries, the female schools, and other matters, I shall hope that you will each one present a thank-offering to God, and let each one give what he can with a sincere desire to promote the glory of God.

"I shall bring out with me the monument for the abolition of slavery, and a view of it, which on my return (should God spare me) I shall present to those who thus act; and I do hope that a sum will be raised which will testify your gratitude to Him who has hitherto blessed you, and your ardent desire to co-operate in every way to extend the knowledge of Jesus you possess.

"Let me, my dear friends, especially invite you, whether deacons or members, to be active for God. Have special prayer meetings in each other's houses, and pray earnestly to God that you may each be instrumental in the conversion of one soul. Do not lose sight of this. If you sincerely make the attempt, God will most assuredly bless it, and we shall have the happiness thereof. There are many estates on which your fellow sinners are perishing; they will die, they will be lost in hell, unless you exert yourselves. Try, try, to save them. Let your religion shine among them. Be kind to them and to one another, live in peace, and the God of peace shall be with you. Mind, then, first, that you live near to God; and then, if you are active, you cannot help being useful. To my dear friends the deacons would I say, Build up the church of Christ. Yours is an honourable, but it is a responsible trust. Aim at deep spirituality of mind. Take care of pride. Discountenance talebearing. Watch over the purity of the church. Be sure that impartiality is manifested in your public conduct. Thus shall I have joy, and not sorrow, when I return. Take special care of your own hearts. Yearn over the young. Pray that the lambs in Christ's flock may be brought in. Visit the sick, and pray with and for them. O prepare, prepare, for heaven. Remember that all is worthless that does not lead us to God and heaven. Farewell till we meet, which I hope will be soon. May Jesus preserve you. May the Holy Spirit bless you. May heaven at length receive you. O blessed Saviour, make them all thine own!

'Such is your pastor's faithful charge,
Whose soul desires not yours but you;
O may he, at the Lord's right hand,
Himself and all his people view.'

May God in his mercy answer the prayer for Jesus' sake?"

Knibb brought with him to England, on this voyage, his eldest two children, Catherine and Ann, with the view of placing them at the institution for the education of the daughters of missionaries, at Walthamstow, near London. Their admission to this institution was happily obtained without delay, and their deportment and progress was satisfactory. During his stay in England he wrote to them many affectionate and serious letters, which afford pleasing specimens of the mode in which he presented the claims of religion to his children.

For this place I have reserved another letter also of the same class, one which he addressed in 1836 to his son William; so that, with a small violation of chronological order, I thus group these illustrations of his parental character together. His letter to his son William was written to him when he was on a visit at the house of another of the baptist missionaries, Mr. Hutchins, and is as follows: —

TO HIS SON WILLIAM.

"*July* 11, 1836.

"My DEAR BOY,—I fully intended to have written to you last week, but the arrival of the Ethelred, with the missionaries you have so long looked for, prevented my doing as I wished. God, in his great mercy, has brought them, as he did you, safely over the great deep; and I hope my boy will pray that God may bless them and preserve them in this sickly land.

"I was very much pleased with your letter, and I hope you will daily gain instruction while you are absent from home, not merely from books, but from observation. Much, very much, is to be obtained in this way, which will be of great use to you should you live to grow up into the vigour of manhood. You must expect, my dear boy, that Jamaica is your home; a place where, if you cultivate those abilities you possess, you may obtain a comfortable livelihood; but where, if you are indolent, you may soon be reduced to distress and shame. It is my fondest desire that you may become a blessing to Africa, or to her children here, that thus you may catch the mantle of your beloved parents, when all their earthly anxieties are forgotten in the tomb.

"Remember, my dear boy, that the fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom, and that if you would be happy yourself, or useful to others, it must be by asking the guidance of that Being who has so often raised you from the gates of death, and who is now blessing you with a good portion of health. Make God your friend, my boy, and your happiness for eternity is secured. You have a mother's God to go to—an incalculable blessing this. Descended as you are from a race of poor but noble minded nonconformists, some of whom have suffered much for Jesus, I would have my boy catch their unquenchable spirit. I pray to God that he would impart their piety, that thus you may become, as they have been, a blessing in the world in which you live.

"I shall expect on your return home, that you will be much improved in your general manner and in knowledge. You are with those who will feel a pleasure in teaching you, if you will learn, and if you can conquer that disposition to listlessness which is the great barrier to your mental improvement, your father's heart will be gladdened. Should God spare your life, you will have to live in a glorious period of the world, when knowledge of every kind is on the advance, and when God is performing the most mighty operations of his grace. You will be left behind, my boy, in the march of mind, if you do not rouse yourself, and will have to obtain your subsistence by manual labour, instead of mental effort; which, though not in the least degrading in itself, would be so to you, being, as it would be, the just punishment of your indolence. Rouse then, my boy, the mental energies you possess, think of some congenial employment, and then determine in dependence on divine aid to devote yourself to it.

"Happy, happy, shall I, as your father, be, should this be the case, that combining the amiable virtues of your mother with the rougher qualities of your father, you may cheer us should our grey hairs be spared to see you, or exhibit to the world the brighter traits of our characters when we are singing the hallelujahs of the blessed.

"We are all through mercy in the enjoyment of health. Your sisters Catherine and Ann desire their kind love to you, and little Thomas, your brother, would if he knew how. He is as fond of chat as ever. I have had his likeness taken, and when I see you growing in knowledge I shall have yours, that should we be separated from each other by distance, I may gaze upon your form in childhood, and call to mind the scenes through which you passed.

"Farewell, my dear boy. A father's most anxious thoughts are often bestowed upon you. Well will he and your mother be repaid, when they see their first-born son commanding esteem by the amiability of his deportment, the approbation of the wise and good by his diligent attention to the duties of his station, and the friendship of the Eternal by a timely flight to the Redeemer, and a life in accordance with such principles professed."

Dr. Hoby, in his memoir of this interesting child, states that, on receiving this letter, he wept much and retired for prayer. "Father's letter is so kind," said he, "I wish I could be what he wants me to be."

From Knibb's letters to his daughters I select the extracts: —

TO HIS DAUGHTER CATHERINE.

"*Leeds.*

"I shall be very happy to converse with you on the state of your mind with regard to eternal things, and I sincerely hope that the many prayers presented for you and your dear sister will be answered in your conversion to God. There is nothing can afford you happiness but true religion, and that can under every affliction and trial. If you seek the Lord he will be found of you, for he has promised not to cast out any that seek his face. Go to him, then, my beloved girl, by prayer. Seek him through the atonement of his dear Son, and you shall find, what your father has found, that the ways of religion are ways of pleasantness, and that all her paths are paths of peace."

TO HIS DAUGHTERS CATHERINE AND ANN.

"*Ramsgate.*

"Well, my dear girls, what shall I write about? If I knew what would be most acceptable it should be about that, and I hope that would be the love of Jesus. Do my dear girls love him? Do they pray to him? And are they anxious for an interest in his great salvation. Fain would their father hope that this is the case, and for this he has been pouring out his soul at the footstool of mercy this morning. Be assured, my dear girls, that nothing but religion can make you really happy, and that in all circumstances it can do so. Then fly at once to that blessed Saviour, who says, 'Suffer little children to come unto me, and forbid them not.'

"Well, and how are you getting on with your lessons—with the writing, the spelling, the music, and the French? It is hard work, is it not? Well, never mind it; try, try, try again, and it will soon be conquered; and then, if alive, back to Jamaica you will come.

"Well, and how with your schoolfellows? I see you at play on the nice greensward; how happy, and how joyful! No quarrelling, I hope. The east and the west meet together, while the north and the south join the merry song. Well, so let it be: a hearty run will do you good, and prepare your minds for fresh study.

"Well, and how with your kind teachers? Affectionate, dutiful, and kind, I would fain hope. If you love them all will be pleasant; they richly deserve your kind regard, and your cheerful obedience."

TO THE SAME.

"I came up this morning from Gravesend, with the intention of once more saying farewell; but as the visit must have been very short, and would only again produce those very natural and proper feelings of pain which yesterday nearly overcame us all, I have thought it better to forbear the momentary pleasure, and to write a few lines to you.

"I have been much, very much, pleased by the general propriety of your behaviour since you have been in England, which makes me happy in leaving you, and I earnestly hope that you will use well the precious time you now have for acquiring that knowledge which will fit you to be useful as you grow up in life. It is to me a source of much gratitude to God that I am able to give you a good education, and I have no doubt but you will improve the advantages you possess. And now, my dear girls, let my parting prayer be remembered by you. My soul yearns over you with the deepest solicitude. I hope I have not spent one day since my arrival in England, without imploring that God would bless you by making you his own dear children. Let me implore my dear girls never to neglect private prayer. Go to your Heavenly Father; he will hear you, and he will bless you. Make Jesus the guide of your youth, and you must be happy. I hope, and fully expect, that we shall meet again on earth, but that, you know, is uncertain; but though uncertain it is all under the direction of God, and he will do just what is best. It is my duty to go, it is yours to stay; so that we may both expect that God will bless us, if we humbly ask him through the atonement of his dear Son. O how will my heart, and the heart of your dear mother, rejoice to learn that their dear girls really love and serve the blessed Jesus, but how much more happy will *you* be, should God thus bless you. And, my dear girls, he has promised to do so. Go to him, then, as poor guilty sinners, and he will accept and bless you. Farewell, my dear children; your father's best wishes and prayers are for your every welfare. I will write to you again, if I have time, from the Downs. See to it, it is your father's parting request, see to it that you make Jesus your guide."

TO HIS DAUGHTER CATHERINE.

"*Ship Reserve, November* 19, 1840.

"I am very much pleased with your letters, and especially with the desire you express to be baptized in the name of the blessed Jesus. Sincerely do I hope that the Divine Being has commenced a good work in your heart, which he will carry on till the day of the Lord. Often, my dear girl, have both I and your dear mother poured out our hearts, both for you and your dear sister Ann, and my cup of happiness will indeed be full when I live to see you both the friends of the blessed Jesus. Respecting your being baptized, I would urge you to seek daily direction from heaven, and be more anxious *to be* a Christian than to make a profession of Christianity. I would not in the least discourage you from making a public profession of your attachment to Jesus, but only impress upon you the great importance of the subject, and the great responsibility of the step you wish to take. May the blessed Jesus direct and bless you, my dear Catherine.

"We are now in the bustle of moving towards the Downs. A father's parting blessing rest upon you both. Live near to God, my dear girls, and you must be happy."

As the period of his departure approached, considerable excitement began to prevail, and the interest was the greater because of the large number of persons he was about to take with him. It was a missionary band of unusual magnitude. Fifteen pious young men and women embarking in foreign work gathered around themselves the sympathies of so many families, of so many congregations, of so many localities, that the whole community seemed to be penetrated by a general sentiment.

The last fortnight Knibb spent in London, in incessant public engagements. A parting communion-service (as was then supposed) was held at Dr. Steane's chapel, Camberwell, on the evening of Lord's day, November the 8th, and on Tuesday, the 10th, a public valedictory service was held at Finsbury chapel. Of course the auditory was crowded, and the service highly exciting. Short addresses were delivered by Messrs. Woolley, May, and Cornford, as well as by Knibb, and the farewell was spoken by Dr. Cox.

The Reserve having lost her bowsprit in the river (an occurrence by which she escaped a severe gale), the embarkation was delayed till Monday, November the 16th; so that an opportunity was taken for another parting communion-service, which was held at New Park Street chapel, Southwark, on Lord's day evening.

At length the day came. With a view to the more general gratification, the Royal Sovereign steamer had been engaged to take down the whole party from London Bridge, with all friends who wished to accompany them. Nearly a hundred persons were on board. For the most part they were to be seen in family or social groups, looking inexpressible things. Knibb was buoyant, and was actively engaged in soliciting from the company present contributions towards the liquidation of the debt on the society. In due time the steamer neared the Reserve, and boarded her; the company having inspected the cabin, they formed in a line, along which the whole missionary band passed in single file, the hand of each being given and taken: then, all standing, a hymn was commenced, during the singing of which the company retired to the steamer, and were gone. The last thing they saw was the manly form of Knibb in the shrouds of the Reserve, waving his cap in cheerful adieu.

CHAPTER XV.

FROM HIS ARRIVAL IN JAMAICA, IN JANUARY, 1841, TO HIS THIRD VISIT TO ENGLAND.

If the sailing of the Reserve with a missionary band of sixteen persons had created a strong sensation in England, her arrival was an occurrence not less exciting in Jamaica. And preparations had been made accordingly.

After "a pleasant and profitable voyage," in which the captain was kind and the company harmonious, but of which I possess no detailed information, the Reserve arrived at Rio Bueno on the 7th of January, 1841. The ship passed Port Maria and St. Ann's Bay between five and six o'clock in the morning, firing two guns at each place for the information of Messrs. Day and Abbott respectively. The latter was soon on board, with unmingled good tidings. At four in the afternoon the party prepared to land. On their entering the long boat two guns were fired from the vessel, and were immediately answered by a shout of exultation from many hundreds assembled on the shores of the harbour of Rio Bueno. They sang as they went the hymn commencing—"How are thy servants blessed, O Lord;" and as soon as their voices had ceased, their African brethren and sisters struck up a response, singing a few verses of affectionate welcome which had been written for the occasion. The excitement of the actual landing must be imagined. For myself I do not know that I can do anything more expressive than to repeat the exclamations of the overjoyed blacks at the time—"Neber see sich a sight before! Neber hear of such a ting!"

The concourse of friends naturally flowed into the chapel. There they poured out their hearts in prayer and praise, and were—was it possible to be otherwise?—inexpressibly happy. On the dispersion of this assembly all the voyagers were hospitably provided for; but I can follow only one of them, and this I do in his own words. Writing to Dr. Hoby on the 22nd of January, Knibb says—"The road to Falmouth, which is fifteen miles, presented an interesting appearance as the different groups of happy peasants welcomed us with blessings, while many who had horses galloped before, and did not leave us till we were safely housed at home. Down flocked the members of the church, some with yams and fowls, and all with the liveliest expressions of hearty good will; and for two or three days I had enough to do to shake hands, and assure the numerous visitors that I really was quite well. On the Lord's day it would have done your heart good to have been present. O, it was a soul-inspiring scene. Full three thousand persons were crowded into the chapel and vestry, while numbers were unable to find a standing place within the walls. I preached to them as well as my feelings would allow me to do, and in the afternoon had the pleasure of commemorating, with about fifteen hundred persons, the love of our dying Lord."

On the 12th of January a public meeting was held in the baptist chapel at Falmouth, for the purpose of welcoming Knibb and his companions to Jamaica. Appropriate resolutions were passed by the meeting, and a short speech was made by Knibb, which, however, affords no matter for extract.

On the 19th of February a public meeting was held in the same place on behalf of the mission to Africa, the attendance overflowing to such a degree that Suffield school-room was also opened, and the excitement being great. On this occasion also Knibb's speech was short, and it supplies no matter for quotation. One of the resolutions passed by the meeting, however, had so direct a reference to himself, that it is proper I should insert it. It is as follows:—

> "That this meeting would acknowledge with heartfelt gratitude the kind care which Divine Providence has manifested towards the Rev. William Knibb, in preserving him amidst the dangers of the deep, in enabling him to arouse the British churches to a sense of their duty towards the island of Jamaica, and in bringing him again in safety, with an additional number of labourers, into this part of the missionary field."

It was among the earliest of Knibb's endeavours to engage the practical concurrence of his people in the pecuniary efforts which he had promised on their behalf, both towards the African mission, and towards the debt of the society. For the latter object he had undertaken that they should raise £500; and on the 27th of January (in less than three weeks) he writes to Mr. Gurney—"Eighteen hundred members of the church have already brought me one shilling each towards the £500." He adds—"They had subscribed for, and wished to give me, a grand dinner; but, at the request of Mrs. Knibb, in which I most heartily concurred, they have given the money to the African mission."

At this period the attendance on the means of grace was large, and the augmentation of the church unprecedented. On the 1st of May no less than two hundred and thirty-four candidates were baptized; and on the 2nd of January, 1842, a hundred and forty-five. On this occasion the three churches of Falmouth, Refuge, and Waldensia, assembled together at Falmouth. Baptism was administered in the sea, at Half Moon Bay, at five in the morning. Before eleven, the hour of public worship, such crowds had arrived that it became necessary to limit admission to the chapel to members and inquirers, and to open Suffield school-room for other parties. When the ordinance of the Lord's supper came to be administered, it was of course requisite that those who were not members should withdraw, in order to make room for communicants. "I am sorry, very sorry," said Knibb, "that those who are not members *must* now withdraw. My dear fellow sinners," he added, "there will be room enough for you in heaven. None will be shut out there but those who now neglect to seek an entrance. Jesus is ready to receive you, and the church is ready to receive you." When the members of the three churches had taken their places, the spacious chapel was completely filled, and the conviction flashed upon them, with mingled pleasure and pain, that they could never meet in that place again. Before proceeding to the ordinance, Knibb addressed the newly baptized in the following terms:—

"You have now all solemnly declared to us that you have felt sincere repentance towards God on account of your sins, and that you have fled for refuge to the Lord Jesus Christ, as the only Saviour of sinners; and on this profession you have this morning been baptized in his name, and are now about to be received into communion with this church. Did my time and strength allow, I should wish now to offer you a few words of Christian caution and entreaty; but it is not needful. You have often been assured by my lips that without holiness not one of you can see the Lord. Let it be yours, then, most earnestly to seek after holiness, to manifest the temper and spirit of Jesus Christ, so that at last you may be received by him, and sit down with all the sanctified in heaven. It remains for me now only to give you, in the name of this church, the right hand of Christian fellowship. With that hand you will receive a heart that longs most intensely for your salvation, and your entire conformity to the will of God. In the name of this church I welcome you amongst us, and may every blessing ever rest upon you!"

"How well do some of us remember," said Knibb, as the ordinance proceeded, "the first sabbath in the new year ten years ago; not ushered in, like this, with the voice of prayer and praise, but with the roll of musketry, and the clashing of weapons. Then the sanctuary of God was in ruins; then we were scattered and peeled, driven to worship him in caves and corners of the earth. I can only judge by my own feelings what must be those of the older members of the church, when contrasting that season with the present. Surely the heart of every one must be ready to exclaim,

'Come, thou Fount of every blessing,
Tune my heart to sing thy praise:
Streams of mercy never ceasing
Call for songs of loudest praise.'"

Gazing at the vast assemblage of the sons and daughters of Africa before him, he further said—"How is it possible we can forbear the language of the most glowing adoration and praise? If we were to be silent, the very stones of this sanctuary might cry out, the very timber might echo to them, and both speak as witnesses against us. Surely immortal natures themselves will require to be expanded, in order to bear the height, the depth, of unutterable joy, if we see at last *all these*, or the great majority of them, standing around the throne, with their robes washed and made white in the blood of the Lamb!"

The sentiment was just and noble. Yet it makes me say, how *little* is man! If a large-hearted man like Knibb thus laboured for utterance in contemplating an assembly containing three thousand of the redeemed, what would he have felt in beholding the thirty thousand which might have been collected from the baptist churches in the same island? What, in beholding the hundreds of thousands which might have been collected from the world? What, above all, must be felt in beholding the assembly which no man can number, standing in glory hereafter before the throne?

The details above given I have taken from a much more lengthened account of the services of this interesting day in the *Baptist Herald.* I have given them, not because they are extraordinary, but because they exhibit the man I am to portray in a light in which the reader has not before seen him. To my mind, however, they are the more gratifying because they are not extraordinary. They contain the common elements of piety. They identify him with ourselves.

While Knibb was thus actively and successfully employed in his Master's work, adversaries of a certain class were extremely busy, both in Jamaica and in England. It was not now the planters, however. He had in a great measure lived down their hostility, and from some of the bitterest of his former enemies he had received most gratifying tokens of repentance and regard. Even the temper of the House of Assembly was so much altered, that they had exempted missionary property generally from taxation. His present troublers were to be found among missionary brethren of other denominations, who still made it their concern to get up and circulate reports disadvantageous to the purity of the churches, and the integrity of the missionaries. Some of these things were done at home by men who had returned from Jamaica, and some by men in the island, who did not scruple to employ the lowest portion of the Jamaica press, and to write under signatures which, after I have given ANTI-HUMBUG for an example of them, I may be excused from characterizing. These attacks were made the more trying by the fact that three of the agents of the Baptist Missionary Society partially concurred in them.

The committee at home were much and seriously engaged with this matter, which, having long occupied the Jamaica Newspapers, at last came before the British public, in the shape of various pamphlets and other publications on both sides. In the spirit of observations which I have already made (see page 206), I proceed to make such extracts from Knibb's correspondence as may be necessary to exhibit the part he acted in this painful controversy.

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Falmouth, April* 16, 1841.

"If Mr. Blyth and his fellow labourers felt half the anxiety for the purity of their churches that I do for those committed to my care, they would have little time, and less inclination, to find fault with those of their brethren. Were I to retail half I hear of the presbyterians, it might give Mr. Blyth quite as much trouble as he and some of his fellow missionaries desire to give us; but I hope I shall be kept from tale-bearing, which is as derogatory to the character of man, as it is inconsistent with the practice of Christianity. That faults exist in our churches, and in theirs, there is no doubt; that they are lessening in ours I am confident, and the increase of agency will enable us to bestow more care upon the members who are connected with us.

"Mr. Blyth may think as he pleases about my politics, and their influence. If the time spent by some missionaries in backbiting, and slandering, and in anonymous scribbling against us in newspapers, were devoted even to the temporal welfare of the people, it would at least be equally consistent with the principles of religion. In spite of what Mr. Blyth, or Mr. anybody else, may say, against civil or ecclesiastical tyranny I hope ever to wage a determined war. My principle is that we are accountable for all the misery we can relieve, and will not; and while I thus feel, I am compelled to seek the welfare of those among whom I reside. If the presbyterians of Jamaica would act with the spirit of their founder in Scotland, that leviathan of iniquity, the established church, might here be quickly removed.

"I shall call a church-meeting as early as practicable, and by the next packet you may expect a reply to the letter, that is, if the church think it worth noticing; if they do not, I shall not. I have no time to spare for such matters, and I deeply regret that any one should so act as to render such proceedings at all necessary.

"We are the sect everywhere spoken against, and must, I suppose, bear it. If it makes us more humble and diligent, the great author of strife will once more be foiled in his attempts to obstruct the reign of peace."

It will be perceived from this letter that Mr. Blyth had again become the accuser, and that a copy of a letter written by him had been forwarded to Knibb by Mr. Angus. This gave rise to a correspondence which it will be proper here to insert.

W. KNIBB TO MR. BLYTH.

"*Falmouth, April* 19, 1841.

"DEAR SIR,—I have received a copy of a letter written by you to Mr Alexander, of Leith, which contains charges against the baptist missionaries and their congregations; and I shall feel obliged if you will inform me whether in them you refer to the church under my care. The statements to which I refer are these:—

"1. 'Several cases have lately occurred to my knowledge, of leaders oppressing the people, and standing between them and the missionaries; and complaints on account of the exactions of money innumerable.' I will thank you to name the leaders and the time when those exactions were made.

"2. 'To such an extent is the practice of rum-drinking increased, that many of them (the leaders) bring their bottles openly to the prayer-meeting.' For the names of these leaders, and the prayer-houses where this improper practice is carried on, I shall feel obliged.

"3. 'A very short time before Mr. Knibb left this island for England, I informed him of tickets being still given to persons who were perfect strangers to the missionaries.'

"This has quite escaped my memory. You wrote to me respecting some exactions of money you heard was collecting, and I requested, in reply, the names of the parties, which I have never received. Will you inform me whether such tickets have been given in connexion with the church at Falmouth station?

"However much I may regret that my conduct is not approved of by others, I shall be happy if I can gain the information I seek, and, if such things do exist, to root them out. If it is meant that I have exacted money, I decidedly deny it; nor have the people, in my opinion, done as much as they easily could have done towards the spread of the gospel. For the destruction of slavery, both ecclesiastical and civil, I have exerted, and intend still to exert myself; but I deny that, in the pursuit of these great objects, I have neglected the higher claims of my pastoral duties.

"I am yours very respectfully,
"WILLIAM KNIBB."

MR. BLYTH TO W. KNIBB.

"DEAR SIR,—I have just received your favour of this date, and, for the present at least, must reply to it very briefly.

"The letter, of which you have now received a copy, will inform you of the causes of my writing it. And I must now repeat what I stated in it, that I am perfectly able to substantiate everything that I ever stated respecting the practices of the baptists. However, as all the other evangelical ministers in the island are of one mind in reference to their conduct, it is not by sending answers to a few queries from an individual minister that the matter is to be settled.

"From a letter which I lately received from Edinburgh, I expect the conduct of the baptists to be made the subject of a rigid inquiry; and, when proper judges of the matter are appointed, I will cheerfully take the responsibility of producing my facts among the rest.

"In the meantime

"I am yours respectfully,
"GEORGE BLYTH."

A copy of this correspondence was sent home by Knibb, with the following letter:—

TO THE REV. J. ANGUS.

"*Falmouth, May* 3, 1841.

"With this you will receive a copy of a letter sent by me, at the request of the church, to Mr. Blyth, and the answer returned. Whom Mr. Blyth esteems proper persons to investigate charges I know not, but you know that the pastor and officers of the church are the only proper individuals to investigate such matters. It is a pity that Mr. Blyth should be so ignorant of the constitution of a Christian church. If either he or the Scotch friends think that we will submit to any presbytery, they are mistaken; and if they do not, this way of getting out of the matter is mere shuffling. On receiving this reply, I convened a full church-meeting, at which about 1,500 members were present. I then laid the whole matter before them in as plain a manner as I could. I read the letters, and the whole accounts of the station, and informed them that at length it was all paid for, and the property regularly vested in trust for their use for ever. I implored them freely to speak their minds, and if they considered themselves oppressed, to say so, for that I could not, and would not, be the pastor of any people who had not confidence in my integrity. The resolutions, Mr. Henderson being in the chair, were proposed by Mr. Edward Barrett, Mr. Dixon, and Mr. Wallace, and I sincerely regret that you did not hear the speeches made. I was perfectly astonished, and so I believe were the mission family who were present. The resolutions were fully explained to them, and at the putting of them the whole church stood up, to testify the confidence they felt in their deacons, and in the appropriation of the money entrusted to my care. At the conclusion I implored them not to speak evil of any of Mr. Blyth's members, as they were so excited that I feared quarrels might arise; and this was the only thing that made me regret the necessity for the meeting.

"And now, my dear brother, I wish you, the committee, and the friends in Scotland, to understand that no notice whatever will in future be taken, by me or by the church, of anything Mr. Blyth, or any other Scotch missionary, may say. I have no time for it. Let any man, be he who he may, give me any instance of moral delinquency in the church, and I will instantly see to its rectifying; but I will not answer any more general charges, nor would any minister who had a proper respect for himself or his church. The mean and paltry efforts now made to ruin us are as disgusting as they are anti-Christian. Let us have open enemies, and see and know what is what; but, with our duties, it is impossible to follow the track of those crawling defamers, whose course is as devious as their conduct is disreputable."

As the imputations cast upon the baptist churches fell with peculiar weight on the deacons and leaders, the whole of these brethren from a considerable number of the churches on the north side of the island were called together, and the matter was fully explained to them. "I did long," says Knibb to Mr. Angus, "that you had been with us, to have witnessed this scene. It was solemn and dignified. Their speeches melted me, yea, all of us, to tears. They deeply feel it, and you will receive a memorial signed by them all, denying the charges, and challenging proof. This I hope you will make use of; to you they look. As a body they are a self-denying, enterprising set of men. Rightly managed, this will do good." The memorial here referred to was signed by not less than one hundred and twenty persons, and inserted in the public papers. I am not aware that its challenge was in any instance accepted.

This matter grew so serious in the estimation of the brethren in Jamaica, that at the ensuing meeting of the association, which was held at Kingston in January, 1842, they unanimously requested Knibb to make another voyage to England, for the vindication of themselves and their churches. He thus announces this decision to Mr. Angus.

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Kingston, January* 20, 1842.

"I write to inform you that I have received a unanimous request from my brethren to visit England, to confer with the committee on several matters connected with the mission. My mind is exceedingly anxious on the subject, and I wish I could escape from the duty. If it be the voice of God, I am willing to go; indeed I dare not refuse. I have not had time to consult Mrs. Knibb, but I do not expect that she will throw any obstacle in the way. I assure you, my dear brother, I had much rather remain where I am; but I belong to Jesus, and care not where I go while I believe that he is my guide."

The church at Falmouth, on being consulted, having given their consent, the way was made plain, and he accordingly sailed from Kingston in the *Tay* steamer, on the 21st of March.

It was not only for the resolution relating to Knibb's return, that this meeting of the Jamaica Baptist Association was remarkable. Another important step was then taken. The reader will recollect that the pecuniary pressure on the society at home had often been presented to the missionaries in Jamaica, as a reason why they should be at least considerate in their pecuniary drafts. For himself Knibb met these appeals in a prompt and generous manner, and he used his influence with his brethren to the same end. At this meeting of the association the subject was largely discussed, and the resolution was come to, that after the 1st of August, 1842, (subject to special exceptions) the brethren would relieve the society altogether of the burden of their support. That this was Knibb's conception, and that it was carried by his influence, there can be no doubt, nor can there be any doubt of the nobleness of the impulse under which he acted. That there were some brethren who questioned the practicability and wisdom of the scheme is true; and the time is not yet come, perhaps, for expressing a final and conclusive opinion of it. Knibb tells Mr. Angus that it had been to him "a trying time," and his own feelings were evidently those of mingled anxiety and hope. "Although," says he, "it will require an effort, and a strong one, to maintain the Jamaica mission among ourselves, I am confident it may be done if the bond of union can be preserved."

Before we accompany Knibb to England, we must just glance with his eyes at the secular condition of Jamaica.

"My heart is rejoiced," said he to Mr. Gurney, shortly after his arrival, "at the general appearance of the island. Neat and commodious cottages are rising in every direction." To his friend Dr. Hoby he wrote thus:—"I have not at present had opportunity to see much into the present state of the cultivation of the soil, but all my impressions are of the most favourable kind, and I am more than ever convinced that all will eventually work out the most sanguine expectations of the friends of liberty. You will be pleased to hear that the land I purchased (I called it Hoby Town) has now one of the neatest villages rising on it that the island presents. Seventy houses are in course of erection, and all the titles bear in them the name of the town. In the centre stands a neat and commodious mission-house, and there are already full two hundred members of one of our churches residing on their own freeholds. It is in a lovely, romantic spot, and I hope that some day you will come and see it." To Mr. Sturge, at the close of 1841, he says, "Everything, as far as the labourers are concerned, is prospering in Jamaica, and free cottages are rising in every direction, so that the papers most opposed to us are beginning to commend the system. My new place, called Kettering, bids fair to be a flourishing village. Nearly four hundred lots are sold, and about one hundred cottages are now erecting. The Normal school is progressing, and I hope soon to combine with it a neat chapel, in which the word of God will be proclaimed."

Professedly to make up for the alleged want of labour in the West Indies, a system of emigration thither from Europe was set on foot by the planters in the year 1840, and it was carried on till the fearful mortality in which it issued rendered its longer continuance impossible. A considerable number of persons went from Ireland to Jamaica, and some of them to a part of Jamaica where the facts of their condition came directly under Knibb's notice. He was powerfully excited by them, and he immediately put in action his usual machinery of public statement and appeal. Several cases, the particulars of which he had ascertained, he inserted in the *Baptist Herald* for 1841, and from that paper of the 14th of July in that year I take the following extract of a letter, exhibiting his general view of the system:—

"I have read with disgust the horrors of the slave trade, and with dismay the atrocities practised upon the Hill Coolies from the East Indies; but I am confident that these, painful as they are, fall short of the refined malice and deep-planned cruelty involved in the present system of European immigration. The present victims of colonial treachery are torn from civilized society, and the comforts of life have been theirs. They are deluded hither by false hopes of realizing a competency, if not a fortune, and the moment they arrive they find that they have been decoyed to ruin and to death.

"Before this system of legalized murder was formed I supposed that the cup of colonial iniquity had been full; but it appears that tyranny needed this last infusion to make her happiness complete; and in the curses of death-struck and agonizing Europeans she now revels with delight. And for this, as a people, we are taxed! Nay: not for this, but to salary a set of needy men, too lazy to work, but not too proud to beg. To appeal to the consciences of such men would be to cast pearls before swine.

"By this system of immigration I consider that the House of Assembly has been, and is still, guilty of deliberate and wholesale murder, and murder in its most aggravated form. Everybody here knows that it is merely a money-getting scheme, a desperate game played by men wrecked in fortune, who have too long fattened on oppression to be aroused to a sense of guilt, even by the groans of their dying victims. If what I advance can be contradicted, let it be. Let the deluded victims speak. Let a court of inquiry be held, let the public know who is right, and whether it be true or false that emigration is another word for slavery, attended by all the additional horrors that must be felt in proportion as the victims have been formerly happy. I feel confident that such an investigation would disclose a scene unequalled in the modern annals of crime; and I hope that his excellency Sir Charles Metcalfe will institute one. He has, I believe, unwillingly, assisted in producing this misery; and justice demands, and mercy implores, that his arm be put forth, ere the whole of the present imported Europeans sink into a premature grave."

At the public meeting held at Falmouth on the 1st of August, 1841, the following motion on the subject was put into his hands:—

"That this meeting regards with the deepest feelings of sorrow and compassion the situation of those unfortunate persons who, forsaking their native clime, have been induced to immigrate to this island, in the delusive hope of finding here an honourable subsistence; and it records its unqualified conviction that the immigration system is in every part a complete failure—bringing in its course untold miseries and death—and that it is but another species of slavery."

The reading of this motion was received with loud cries of "yes, yes." The following is that portion of Knibb's address which relates to the subject:—

"I appear now before you, to express in the most distinct manner my utter abhorrence of a course of proceeding which entails on so many of our fellow creatures certain misery and death. I am perfectly convinced, that, could it be known that the thousands of pounds expended in sending European labourers to this island issued only in their utter ruin, and in hurrying them to a premature grave, an end would speedily be put to this infernal—(mark the word)—this infernal system of immigration. We have frequently been taunted with the remark that we were regardless of the sufferings of white men, and that we cared only for those who were black, and from whom we might hope to gain something. Let the history of the white immigrants who have reached this island answer this. From whom have they met with assistance? From the missionaries. Many of them would already have perished without it. Many of them have appealed to other quarters, but in vain. In this town one of them walked into a store to solicit some help in his distress, and he was just pointed to the beam which hung from the ceiling; and that was all the answer he obtained. Where did poor Higgins, who was turned adrift without money, and others deceived like himself, find relief from utter starvation? At the despised missionary's house. Without this they declare that they must have died from want.

" But perhaps some one may say, What has this question to do with such a meeting as this, or with your Anti-Slavery Society? It has much to do with it, because it has to do with the condition of our peasantry. We know that these white men were brought out to lower the price of labour amongst our black population, and thus to take the work out of their hands. But if any scheme on earth has miserably failed of its purpose, assuredly it is this. The planters in this island have been compelled by their own experiment to show the black people that they cannot do without them. I hope, however, my friends, that you will allow no circumstance to make you at all indifferent to the sufferings of these poor white men. Though you know that they were brought out to lower your wages, do not let this influence you in your conduct towards them. This is not their fault. They are deceived and injured men, see that you render them all the assistance in your power, and bring them all the help you can. ('Yes, yes.') They have an especial claim upon you, because they are not only suffering men, they are from the country which set you free.

" We have been accused of exaggeration in reference to the immigrants. We appeal to facts. The half has not been told, and we are persuaded that if an inquiry be instituted (and we will not rest until this is done), it will bring to light such scenes of appalling misery and distress as no one could have imagined. Ask the different estates on which these unfortunate men have worked—ask the hospitals and workhouses in which they have languished and died, to unfold their tales of horror. Let Spring, and Altamont, and Seaford Town, answer. Let poor May, who with his infant child, perished a few days since in wretchedness and misery, leaving six orphan children, let him witness to the truth of our assertions. Let ——— and his wife, who died lately at Glamorgan, leaving an infant orphan, who, when she shall arrive at an age capable of knowing her loss, shall mourn the destitution with which her birth invested her. Let these be witnesses. There are those present who have stood by the bedside of the unhappy immigrant while life was ebbing fast, and his pulse was beating its surrender to the pale conqueror. If Spring estate is not covered with immigrants' graves, then let the men arise and show themselves. If Seaford Town is not watered with widows' and orphans' tears, then let the husbands and the fathers arise and speak."

In order to bring together all that relates to this subject, I shall here depart from exact chronological order, and anticipate a little. At the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, held in London on the 13th of May, 1842, Knibb made a speech which turned chiefly on the topic of European emigration to Jamaica; and that part of his speech will find its most suitable place here. He spoke as follows:—

"I implore this assembly not to allow their souls to be harrowed up by the continuance of the bloody and murderous system of European immigration. The scenes I have witnessed I shall never forget. In circumstances which I could not mention to this audience, have the victims of this accursed plan been hurried into eternity. I declare, without the least fear of being contradicted—and if the House of Commons think that I cannot prove it, let them call me as a witness to their bar—that there have been scenes in Jamaica within the last two years, unequalled in atrocity by any thing connected with the foreign slave-trade. When I think of the manner in which these poor deluded people came, and of the comfort which was the lot of some before they left their homes;

when I call to mind that I have stood by their bedsides when disease and starvation have combined to hurry them from the world, and have seen the misery of their last gasp, and have had the office of consigning them to the tomb—I implore on behalf of Ireland that she be rescued from a system which entails misery on all who go, and must bring down on its abettors the just judgments of God. So convinced was Sir C. Metcalfe of this that he requested me to interfere. I know his excellency thought I could not prove what I had asserted with respect to one estate; but he ordered an investigation. Mr. Kelly, a special magistrate, was invited to Spanish Town, and his evidence was taken before the Committee of Council, but it was so abominably filthy that it was suppressed. I have it, however, and the world shall have it too; and if it is necessary to state how I obtained it, that shall be done, for on that subject I care for no individual that breathes. It was but the other day that I went to one of the jails in Jamaica. No doubt many people will say I had no business there; but I have business every where where tyranny dwells. I saw in that jail a poor Irish girl, seventeen years of age, fed upon the coarsest corn-meal, without coffee or tea, or anything else but water. Seeing her there, I inquired what was her crime. She told me that she had been hired by Mr. Hylton at £8 a year, her food to be found her; and that when he had taken her seventeen miles up the country, he told her that he would give her only £6. She was one of the unfortunate victims who went out in the Robert Kerr. For refusing to work for £6, what did the chief magistrate do to her? He called two of his brother magistrates into his house to dine, and after dinner they held a court in his house, and sentenced this poor Irish girl, who had not been in the island three weeks, to pay a fine of £3, and in default of finding goods upon which the fine could be levied, to imprisonment for fourteen days. The moment I saw her I said, 'I will pay the money, and you come out.' That poor girl had been walked barefoot seventeen miles under a burning sun, to a jail in the midst of a deadly morass, and there she had been placed for fourteen days. I had her taken care of in the mission house. I said to the jailer, 'Give me a copy of her commitment.' He replied, 'I dare not do it; what would the magistrate say?' I answered, 'I don't care whether you durst or not; you shall. You know that every person committed has a right to a copy of their commitment, and I demand it in behalf of this poor girl.' Here it is—

"'Whereas Eliza Kennedy, an immigrant, located on Retirement, the property of Thomas Rickets Hylton, Esq., has been convicted before us, David Mason, sen., and David Mason, jun., Esqs., two of her majesty's justices of the peace for the parish of Westmorland, of refusing to do the duty she had agreed upon to perform to the said Thomas Rickets Hylton, and has been sentenced to pay a fine of £3 sterling, or in default of goods to levy upon, to fifteen days in the house of correction, agreeable to the act to encourage immigration to this island: And whereas no goods to levy on have been found; these are in her majesty's name.'

"I thought my first duty was to tell the governor about this. I wrote to Daniel O'Connell, but I think the post office stopped the letter. The governor's reply you shall have.

"'Sir,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 26th ult. Inquiry will be made into the circumstances of the case therein reported, and pending the receipt of the result, the governor suspends his judgment on the conduct of the parties concerned. But whatever the causes may have been, his excellency deeply laments that a young female, immediately after her arrival in this island, should have been subjected to a fine which she could not be expected to pay, and to the consequent degradation and danger of imprisonment. He requests you to accept his thanks for your generous interference in paying the fine, and rescuing the unfortunate prisoner from confinement, and begs leave to transmit herewith the amount of the expense which he understands you to have incurred upon that occasion.'"

The reading of this note being received with loud cheers, Knibb proceeded—"Honour to whom honour is due. I feel pleasure in referring to the kindness which the governor has, more than once, manifested to these poor deluded creatures. I regret, however, that in his last despatch on leaving the colony, he has still recommended, under certain conditions, a new trial of this immigration scheme. If he had not done this—if the whole of his official weight had not been thrown into the scale, I should not have stated some circumstances which duty now compels me to lay before you. I have here an account of immigration to different parishes. I wish you to understand that I have been there. Mine is no hearsay evidence. I have gone to the bedside of these poor victims, and I have endeavoured to smooth their passage to the tomb. On Hyde Hall estate, between March and July twenty-one immigrants arrived, six with wives and children, the rest single men. In November the same year, twelve of the men and women were dead, four of the children were dead, six of the widows and orphans had been shipped by the kindness of an individual for America, five were in the hospital, and three remained fit to work. On the 19th of April four persons from Ireland were situated at Glamorgan—these estates are not on the plain, they are in the mountain—and the man, the woman, and three children, were dead by the 10th of June. The other day, I went to another estate, at Edington, to the windward of Dundee. I saw on that estate two Irish families from London. On one bed, without a rag to cover them, lay the father, vomiting blood; on the same bed lay also two children, one four and the other two years of age; in a corner of the room lay a girl of fourteen, ill with ague and fever; and the mother had not a farthing to support any of them. In the next room, which I visited after having prayed with this poor Irishman, and done something else for him (for it is of no use to attend to the soul if you do not take care of the body), I saw another Irishman on his deathbed. I wrote to the governor, telling him that the only alternatives were the removal of the survivors back to England, or their death. The governor wrote back to this effect—'If these are the only means, take a passage for the whole, and I will pay the expense, let it be what it may.' I returned to these poor people with the joyful tidings, but though a vessel was to sail in ten days, three of the parents died previously, and two of the children. There were three orphans whom I sent in a carriage to my own house; one died before it had been there six hours, the other two are in the normal school, and they are supported by his excellency, Sir Charles Metcalfe. Here is the letter from his secretary, with which he sent me the money: —

"'SIR,—I am directed to acknowledge the receipt of your letter of the 8th instant, and to transmit herewith a check for £30, being the amount stated to be sufficient for the board and education of three orphan children for one year.'

"One being dead, I told the governor that there were plenty of others, and that I should soon find one. I can prove that the Irish immigrants have been not only deceived, but starved to death. I can prove that a mother has lain with her two children beside her, the one ten years of age, and the other an infant, dying at her breast, while her other daughter has been helplessly weeping over the putrid remains. I can prove that my poor fellow creatures are subsisting on what is called Spanish needles—what is given to feed rabbits—mixed with water. A body of these poor Irishmen came to me—our pockets ought to be fuller than baptists' pockets usually are, to supply all the demands that are made on them—and implored me to do something for them. 'What can I do?' 'O, get us out of this country!' Another poor man said, 'I will walk a mile on my knees to thank you, if you can get me out of this place.' A woman who landed in 1835 assured us that she came out with a hundred and fifty immigrants, twenty of whom returned home, while all the rest, except herself, were dead. Let those who are carrying on this plot in reference to the West Indies hear these facts. They *shall* hear them through the public press. I would suggest and implore, that a ship be immediately freighted by the British government (it cannot be better employed) to fetch home these immigrants. Let them throw their guns overboard, and put up hammocks for the dying. I hope there are spirits in this country that will assist me in carrying out this object. There are yet a few withered creatures left, there are a few orphans and widows, and I implore that no time may be lost in fetching them home again."

Upon one portion of this speech I must offer a remark. It appears that Sir Charles Metcalfe did order an investigation into the condition of the European immigrants, and that the matter was gone into by a committee of the council. Before this committee, of course, much evidence was taken; but none of it has ever been officially published. It was not, as is usual with such information as the government chooses to communicate on West India affairs, laid before parliament, nor was it, I believe, ever moved for in opposition to the government. It is implied, however, in Knibb's language, that the greater part of it was sent home, although not published, while he expressly states that a portion of it was so frightful that it was not sent home, but was expunged from the record. This part of the evidence having been privately furnished to him, he gave it to the committee of the Anti-Slavery Society, who published it in the *Anti-Slavery Reporter* of July 13, 1842, and sent a copy of it to Lord Stanley, then secretary of state for the colonies, with the facts as stated to them. The issue was, that in reply to an inquiry from his lordship founded on this communication, the governor of Jamaica stated that such evidence had not been given before the council. This fact was not known to Knibb himself (it is now, I believe, for the first time made public), so that he never felt himself called on to verify his assertion. I am not convinced, however, that the statement of the colonial functionary possesses any other than diplomatic accuracy. Whoever will take the trouble to look at the alleged evidence itself will be satisfied, I think, that if it had not been given before the council, an assertion to this effect would have been repelled in a very different manner. The highly respectable persons implicated would have too seriously resented such an unjustifiable use of their names, and the adversaries of Knibb would have been too glad to have caught him in such a predicament as that of agitating the British public by fabricated evidence, to have suffered him so easily to escape.

In the next chapter we shall accompany him in his third visit to England.

CHAPTER XVI.

HIS THIRD VISIT TO ENGLAND.

"I SAW you leave Port Royal," wrote Knibb to his wife on the Wednesday after he sailed, "though I fear you did not see me; and all the way I was tormented with fear for your safety in crossing over to Kingston, the wind was so very high. I trust, however," he added, "that you arrived in safety, and that, ere this reaches you, you will long have been at beloved Kettering." Such were the tender conjugal sentiments with which the subject of this memoir commenced his sixth passage across the Atlantic. There are several letters from which the incidents of the voyage may be learned.

TO HIS WIFE.

"*At Sea, off Cuba*, 23*rd March*, 1842.

"A melancholy feeling, as deep as I have ever felt, came over me after you left, and forbade me to think that a dream which I now found a reality. I hope that I am in the path of duty, and then come what will all must be right.

"We are about forty-six in number, including three ladies. A strange medley there is of Spaniards, free-thinkers, slave owners, and I know not what. Already one of the passengers (a female aged twenty-four) has died of a rapid consumption, and on me devolved the melancholy task, about an hour ago, of committing her body to the deep. She died last evening at eight o'clock. I did not know she was ill until a few minutes before her death. I have not yet seen her husband or her sister, who are both on board. O that this event may be abundantly sanctified! But you would wonder to see the little impression here produced. Gambling was continued when the news of the death was mentioned, and resumed within half an hour after the funeral. Among the passengers is the judge of Demerara, and a respectable planter, who speaks well of the working of the system, of the missionaries, and of the people. With him I have had some very interesting conversation; and, as I came away without any lock, he has kindly taken charge of my purse. This was a sad mistake, but it is too late to rectify it.. I forgot to say that among the passengers is a young clergyman, only two months out at Demerara, having lost his wife. He does not appear to be more than twenty-one years of age, and is a confirmed drunkard. The officers of the ship would not allow him to read the funeral service, and he is generally shunned. If I can get at him I will, and may God in his mercy teach me how. It is said that the death of his wife has produced partial insanity, and I would fain hope that this is the case. O what a mercy to be kept from being a disgrace to Christianity! We have on board three men who have been taken from a slaver, and are now being taken to Havana to be tried; so you will perceive that I am cast among as diverse a company as generally falls to a sea voyage.

"*Saturday morning.*—Yesterday, amidst all the tom-foolery of Good Friday, we arrived at Havana. It is a most magnificent place, and looks very much like a European city. Between two and three hundred vessels from all parts of the world are in this harbour, two steamers ply every ten minutes across it, and it is fortified in the strongest manner. I have not been on shore. All the flags are half-mast high, and Judas in effigy was yesterday hung. If they could catch me, I have no doubt they would think me a very excellent substitute. The British consul, Mr. Turnbull, came on board yesterday, and I hope to see him again ere I leave."

The letter from which I next take a few extracts was addressed to the daughter of his friend and brother, Mr. Burchell.

TO MISS BURCHELL.

"*Atlantic, off the Azores, April* 13, 1842.

"We first sailed to Havana, in Cuba, the harbour of which is very imposing, and the city is very splendid. About three hundred vessels were in the fine harbour, many of them loaded with meal for the slaves, the stench of which was almost as bad as the infamous practice of slavery itself. Here popery and slavery, with their inseparable companion cruelty, reign; and thousands of unhappy victims labour and die without any knowledge of Jesus, or of the way of salvation through his precious blood. What a mercy, my dear girl, for you, that this name you have heard from your infancy. Surely I may hope that you are now saying, My Father, my Father, thou shalt be the guide of my youth. We left Havana on sabbath morning, and on Tuesday morning we were safely anchored in the roadstead at Nassau; but the surf here was so great that we could not land, or I should have gone to see our missionary, Mr. Capern, who is still labouring, and I hope successfully, in the Redeemer's cause. The town of Nassau appears a very neat place from the sea. The coast is low, but the houses appear to be well built, especially those belonging to the different departments of government. Having landed our mails, we proceeded the same evening on our voyage, and on the sabbath morning we made Bermuda, and by four in the afternoon were in the bason of the dockyard at Ireland's Eye. Bermuda is rather a cluster of small islands growing out of the sea, than one. Ireland's Eye is about a mile and a half long, with a beautiful gravel walk all round. Here are an extensive dock-yard and military barracks, with the most complete fortifications I have ever seen. Beautiful but small cedar groves are very plentiful, with the wood of which elegant boats are made. Most of the cottages are whitewashed, even the roofs; and being surrounded by gardens, with peas, beans, potatoes, &c., they look very neat. In a most romantic delve, secluded and calm, is the European grave-yard. There on the sabbath evening I walked, musing on the mementos of mortality that appeared on every hand. The old and the young were there, and the servant was free from his master. In the evening I found a small company of soldiers in the house of God, and heard a warm-hearted, though not a clear-headed, address from a local preacher among the Wesleyans. On Monday I crossed the romantic harbour, and walked three miles to Hamilton, a little sea-port town, the road to which is the most lovely I ever trod. Smiling little boys and girls were trudging away to school, dressed in the English fashion, and all nature seemed gay. The thermometer was 60. I returned by water, through a lake studded with about twenty small islands, and reached the ship in the evening. On the 14th we reached Fayal, one of the Western Islands, where I went on shore for two hours. It is a lovely country, a miserable town, a wretched peasantry, and a bloated priesthood."

In relation to the object of his voyage, which, it will be recollected, was the vindication of himself and his brethren from the charges brought against them in Jamaica, Knibb's spirits were low, and his mind anxious. In order to prepare himself for the vindication of his brethren, he had issued circular inquiries to all of them, requesting such answers as might put him into full possession of facts; but the returns forwarded to him were very incomplete. On this subject he wrote thus to Mrs. Knibb:—"Although, in the review of the path I have chosen I feel that I have done right, I am more and more convinced of its difficult nature. So many of the brethren have not sent any returns, that I am quite unable to present a clear statement to the committee; this I very much regret, and had I expected to have been so served, I most certainly should not have come. From eleven or twelve of the brethren I have received no letters at all, and from some others nothing definite. This has grieved me much, and will, I think, seriously retard my work. However, if I find it so, I shall throw the blame where it belongs, and return as speedily as I can to my home. What will the committee think, when they learn that twelve of the missionaries feel so little interest in the mission as not even to reply to their own circular? Well, so it is, and a very 'awkward fix' it has placed me in."

In another letter he says, "I have, however, enjoyed some sweet intercourse with Heaven, and I do hope that I am in the path of duty." Off the Land's End he wrote to Mr. Angus in the following terms:—"I deeply feel the responsibility involved in my present mission; and I hope I have sincerely prayed that my ever-indulgent Father would again vouchsafe his presence and blessing on the feeble agency I long to employ for his service."

The moment of Knibb's arrival was on this occasion sufficiently felicitous. He was just in time to be present at the open meeting of the committee held on the morning of Tuesday, the 26th of April. This meeting was numerously attended, and before it he laid at length the communications with which he was charged, greatly to the satisfaction of the brethren. The following resolution was then unanimously passed: —

> "That this meeting unites in heartfelt thanksgiving to the Father of mercies, for having again permitted their beloved brother, William Knibb, to revisit his native shores; receives him amongst them with affectionate congratulation, and renews the expression of their unreserved confidence in him, and in the band of missionary brethren in Jamaica in whose name he has now addressed them."

On Thursday, April 28, the annual meeting of the society was held at Exeter Hall, Henry Kelsall, Esq., of Rochdale, in the chair. Upon this occasion also Knibb went fully into the charges which had been brought against himself and his brethren; and it will be necessary for me, by some considerable extracts from the speech which he then delivered, to give a general idea of the manner in which he executed his delicate and arduous task.

After the applause amidst which he rose had subsided, and after he had delivered a brief introductory sentence, he uttered these noble words: —

> "I sincerely regret that, in the course of my speech, it may be thought by some that I shall, at least by implication, throw blame on brethren whom I ever wish to love as one in Christ Jesus; but this respected assembly will bear me witness, the congregated ministers of Jesus Christ will bear me witness, that during the whole of my sojourn in England in days that are past, however

much they might hear me denounce oppression, however much I might desire the liberty of man, from these lips they have never heard a single word against any brother missionary on earth. And if I cannot now clear my own character, and those of my beloved brethren, without impugning the characters of other missionaries, I will leave them and myself under all the odium in which the charges brought may involve us, until I and my mistaken brethren stand and receive our award from our common Master."

He then took a general view of the charges which had been preferred: —

"The charges which have been preferred against the baptist missionaries in Jamaica, and have not only been industriously circulated in the island newspapers, but, as I have reason to know, have been extensively sent over to this country, refer to several points: — to the exaction of money; to the lavish waste of it, when thus exacted, in the erection of splendid and ill-advised chapels, in extravagantly furnished houses, and in style of living inconsistent with Christian simplicity; to a reckless admission of members into the churches of Christ; and to a careless keeping in of those whose conduct is adverse to the principles of Christianity. I shall endeavour, because it is due to you—due to those who have welcomed me in days that are past—due to those who in days of persecution and distress supported and sustained us—due to those who can forgive some of the expressions which juvenile ardour must use when civil and religious liberty is the theme—I say it is due to you, standing, as I do, the representative of my beloved brethren, that I should speak candidly, in order that you may investigate seriously. Standing here as the deputed representative of every missionary in Jamaica present at our association, it is requisite that I should carry from this meeting either your condemnation or your approval. I shall not be satisfied with that which would still give to us a Christian character, but connected with imprudences which to no Christian character ought to attach."

Having read, first the letter of his brethren to himself, and then his circular of queries to them, he addressed himself to the charges specifically.

The first he noticed was founded on the fact, that while much money had been raised by the churches in

Jamaica, much also had been drawn from England. His answer to the charge of extravagance hence inferred was in these terms: —

> "It is necessary for me here, and I am thankful that our esteemed treasurer is present, to refer to the last time when I had the pleasure of attending a committee meeting with reference to the re-erection of our chapels. In the year 1832, as you are aware, the whole of our chapels in the western district of the mission were destroyed; and our friends of the London Missionary Society will be aware, that it was just when we returned to re-erect them that they commenced their mission. The arrangement that was made between the committee and ourselves was this, that they would vote, from what was given by parliament and what was raised by the Christian church, a certain sum to every missionary station; that during the time of the re-erection of the chapels, they would continue the salary to each missionary; but that all extraneous expenses, such as the lighting and cleaning of the chapels, and the maintenance of schools, should be paid by the people themselves."

He then entered into the details of the work done, in order to show that enough had been effected to account for the expenditure of the money raised in Jamaica, and he summed up the particulars thus: —

> "In the Western Union, from the year 1835 to 1840, the chief burden devolved upon eight missionaries. We completed during this time eighteen chapels, and they cost us £61,421 sterling. We have purchased, or built, twenty-three mission-houses; and they have cost us £15,150 sterling. We have furnished twelve of them, and that has cost us £2,000 sterling—about £150 each. We have built nineteen school-rooms, and they have cost us £6,000 sterling. For the erection of the whole of these eighteen chapels, with the school-rooms and the mission-houses that we have built, the parent society voted, from the amount which you and the British government jointly raised, the sum of £12,000 sterling, leaving us to find the sum of £72,082. Of this we have paid off, besides supporting our schoolmasters and assistant missionaries, the sum of £60,082."

In order to show that the money raised in Jamaica had been not only spent in fact, but spent with wisdom, he produced letters from Messrs. John Candler, Joseph John Gurney, and Joseph Sturge, who had all seen the buildings referred to, and who all spoke of them in highly satisfactory terms. Better testimony could not have been adduced.

He then briefly touched the charge of personal extravagance in the following manner: —

> "I hope, then, that, so far as brick and mortar are concerned, I have fairly cleared both myself and my brethren from the charge of extravagance in building. I think too that, if, after this, any persons talk of the splendid carriages of the missionaries, they ought to be rebuked with all the force that Christian prudence, combined with Christian patriotism, demands. There is something so exceedingly irksome to me in speaking of the food I eat, or the dress I wear, or the horses I choose to drive, or the carriage in which I choose to sit, that nothing but the fear lest some individuals in humble life should think that in these we have exceeded induces me to refer to this topic. I hope you will be kept from the blush of shame, and refrain from that hissing which such a statement may induce, when I tell you that, so costly is the magnificent car in which the pope of Jamaica (for so the accusers call me) visits his diocese, that it cost him just fifteen guineas at the Pantechnicon, and here is the receipt."

Before adverting to the ticket system and its alleged abuses, which had long been a topic of eager accusation in Jamaica, he noticed the assertion made by some of the presbyterian missionaries as a justification of their newspaper attacks, that private letters of expostulation had been sent to him and had been totally disregarded, and he declared that no private letter of the kind had ever been received by him.* He cited also his correspondence with Mr. Blyth, and the public challenge of the deacons and leaders, as proofs that he had been earnestly desirous of "getting at the bottom of the matter." He then spoke as follows:—

---

* It was subsequently ascertained that a resolution of presbytery had been come to that such a letter should be written, but that the party entrusted with the execution of this design had neglected to fulfil it. The assertion was doubtless made on the assumption that what had been intended had been also done.

"I hope that in the remarks which I shall now make upon the discipline of the churches, I shall not be understood to affirm that there is nothing bad in it. I have never said so; I should be foolish if I did. What I maintain is this—that we know of nothing bad, that we have, as pastors, done the utmost that Christian gentleness, combined with truth, demands from us. We have what are called inquirers and what are called members. To each of these individuals we personally give a ticket. They are such tickets as you have given you to come here. That it is possible that some missionaries have given them injudiciously, I do not deny; all that I deny is, that I ever had such an instance fairly laid before me. That it is possible that some individuals may, in the early part of our mission, have placed some confidence in them, I do not attempt to deny; all I say is, that I have heard of no such case, nor have I witnessed one in the church under my care. You will remember that I wrote to the whole of my brethren on the matter, and the whole of them from whom I have received answers aver that for several years they have not known of a single instance of the kind. They allow that in the early period of the mission there might have been something of the kind, and they used their efforts to repress it; but the vast amount of good has outweighed the temporary evil ten thousand fold. You will agree with me, I trust, that it is not necessary to destroy every system that has something wrong connected with it. Many pay a superstitious regard to the Lord's supper: but is that any reason why we should not observe it?

"It is useless for me to say that we have a system in the distribution of the tickets—we have not: nor have my brethren, so far as I know. After having met them for seventeen years, and talked over this matter at our stations, I have gathered how they act. Some of them never receive a farthing when they give a ticket; others think that they may as well take the money then as at any other time. We do not give out these tickets unless the persons come for them; we then tell them what we think we shall want for the incidental expenses during the year, and if they can afford four shillings, to bring that amount, or if they cannot, to bring three shillings, or two shillings. There is no price set on a ticket; and the man who says that there is defames my brethren. We choose this time to relieve the poor; and when they come for their tickets, instead of giving us anything, we give them something. Nay, frequently, when an old man or an old woman has brought me money, I have given it back, telling them that I cannot, and will not, take it from old people. The inquirers receive the same sort of tickets, and the reason we give them is this—at least, my own reason; many persons say that they are baptists who have no connexion with us, and we have no means of ascertaining who are in connexion with us as inquirers without having recourse to some method of this kind. As to saying that we could not get the money without them, we could get it easily enough. It is said that these tickets are viewed with a superstitious regard. I have instituted examinations into the subject, and have prosecuted them till the members of the church have asked me, ‘Do you think we are such fools as this?’”

He proceeded after this to describe the manner in which members were admitted to the churches.

“With respect to the admission of members into our churches, I will repeat what has already been in print, that I never have received into the Christian church one person whom I dared reject. I have earnestly prayed to God for direction, and I have seen persons go from my door weeping as if their hearts would break because I would not receive them. I know that a great deal of the examination of females for church fellowship devolves upon our wives; but it will not be necessary for me to state that there are reasons why females should be thus employed, when you think of the former state of Jamaica. It is right that this should be done by females, who, though unobtrusive, are well qualified to form a judgment, and who know what the female mind of Jamaica is; in their humble walk they never slacken, though seldom praised, but are doing a work which angels will admire, and Jesus approve. I say, if we are wrong to take the testimony of our wives to the competency of those in scriptural knowledge who wish to come into our churches, being females, then we are wrong, and shall be wrong still. After this examination has been gone through, I always speak to the parties in a body. (I will give you an account of how long the parties admitted by me in one year have been waiting for baptism, having been regular attendants all the time :—

'Six, for nine years; ten, for eight years; eighty, for seven years; fifty, for six years; forty-seven, for five years; thirty-three, for four years; seventy-six, for three and two years;—making a total of three hundred and two.' Now, what else can we do? I ask my brother ministers who are older than myself, what would they do? Let them tell us how they receive their members; and then, if their plan is better than ours we will follow it, if not we will keep to our own.) After this address has been given, in the pulpit, before the whole congregation (I care not who is there), I read the name of every individual publicly, with their place of abode, stating that I have been satisfied with their confession of faith, but earnestly requesting any member, if they know any thing wrong in their conduct, to come and tell me; adding, that if they do know it and do not apprize me of it, their blood rests on their own head, and not on mine. I then feel that I have done all I can, for I am not the searcher of hearts. God has commanded me to baptize those who profess to believe, and I do it. We then always wait a fortnight; and if in the interim nothing is said—and sometimes there is, respecting some quarrel or other—but if nothing be said, I baptize them. With this right hand I have thus given admission to thousands into the church of God. Our expulsions are conducted in the same manner. Every person is expelled the church publicly; and be it known that we are the only denomination who print what we do. Look at the records of other missionary societies, and find a tabular view, if you can, of the number of their exclusions and restorations. When a person is penitent he is forgiven; but he always stands in the church to be rebuked, and admonished that he repeat his crime no more. Do you do so here? Do you 'rebuke those that sin before all, that others may fear?' Do we do right in pursuing this plan, however painful it may be to our own feelings? From the time of the London Missionary Society commencing its operations in Jamaica, down to the year 1840, we have in this manner received into the church of Christ eighteen thousand six hundred and ninety-one members; we have had to exclude from our numbers (for it is best to tell you all) one thousand nine hundred and thirty-four; we have received back again on their repentance, in the manner I have described, one thousand six hundred and thirty-one; so that, though the restorations are not equal to the exclusions—for some time must elapse between their expulsion and restoration—in the whole mission, abstracting none who may have died under the censure of the church, there do not remain, of those who have been excluded from it, more than three hundred and three who have not been restored to it. I ask you whether you can show such a return? In the year 1835 we had thirteen thousand nine hundred and sixty-six members; we have now twenty-seven thousand six hundred and seven: in the year 1835 we had ten thousand inquirers; in the year 1840 we had eighteen thousand nine hundred and eighty-four. I am perfectly aware that statements like these will startle some of you. All I can say is, come and see for yourselves. We will open our hearts to receive you, we will open our houses to receive you, we will open our churches to receive you, and you shall judge for yourselves."

Knibb's extended address was at this point suspended for the purpose of making the collection, after which he resumed. He now adverted to another accusation.

"It has been said that the baptist missionaries dare not publish their accounts, and that if they did, the baptist mission would be ruined. Very well: then I will publish mine. I do not care who knows what I do. I returned in the year 1835. I received from the Baptist Missionary Society, and from the British government (the latter being given as a compensation for the ruin of our chapels), £4860 old money, and I have received from the negroes in Jamaica (and very little from anybody else), that is to say, from the church at Falmouth, during the same period, together with its sister churches at Refuge and Waldensia, the sum of £17,705 15s. 7½d. old currency. Now I think I hear some saying, 'And what have you done with it?' Why, I have not pocketed it; I have not bought any sugar estates; I have no money in the funds; but I have plenty in the negroes' pockets whenever I want it. I will tell you what I have done with it. The chapel at Falmouth cost £8000, (seats 2500 persons); fitting up the same, lights, monument, &c., £500. The monument was to commemorate the abolition of slavery: was that wrong? It cost one hundred and twenty guineas; it is a beautiful white marble one, over the pulpit. If it is wrong to erect such a thing, we have done wrong. 'Fence round the premises, £450; making £8950. Erecting a school-room in Falmouth, and fencing round the yard, £1140. Mission-house purchased, £1286. Furniture for the same, £411 6s 8d. Library for the use of the minister, £200.' It contains the works of Howe, Watts, Henry, and others which ministers very much love, and of which they sometimes make great use. 'Erecting chapel at Refuge, £1510; enlarging the same and school-room, £740. Furniture for Refuge house, £100. Erecting chapel at Waldensia, £1252 13s. 4d; enlarging the same, and school-room, £854. Making a total of £2,106 13s. 4d. Paid towards purchasing a house at Waldensia, leaving a balance of £300 sterling, on giving up the station to the Rev. J. E. Henderson, £200.' 'Raised and appropriated by the church and congregation during these five years, for building chapels, £11,882 4s. 7½d. Sums voted from the committee and friends in England, £4860. Balance paid, £1 15s 4½d.' What have you done with the rest? some will say. I will tell you. 'Incidental expenses for the year 1835, £174 10s. 10d. Carried to building account, £1774 19s. 7d. 1836. Assistant ministers' salary, and part of school-masters' ditto, £450. Lighting, cleaning, and incidental expenses, £118 7s 1d.;' and so it goes on to the end of the chapter. In the year 1839, I was subjected to an infamous lawsuit. I had to stand at the bar of my country for the purpose of rescuing myself from the charge of receiving stolen cheques; and such was the baseness of a Jamaica jury, that though the chief-justice stated that no one ever brought a more clear case into court—for I deposed on oath as to the falsehood, and implored the man, if he could prove the charge, to do so—the jury found my accuser Not Guilty. This involved me in a personal expense of more than £500. The church came forward with a liberality that did them honour, and said, 'Minister, it shall not cost you one halfpenny, we will pay the whole.' I accepted the sum of £100, which we received from home, though not from the society. In addition to this, we sent to the Anti-Slavery Society £168, that is, £100 sterling. When the chapel at Savanna-la-Mar was burnt down, though we had not finished our own, (we knew what it was to be without one), we sent them £200. When I was here in 1840, there was expended in salaries of ministers and supply of stations, £1320. I wish it to be known that, when in England, I did not receive a fraction from the committee, except when I was travelling for them, nor do I receive a fraction now. I wish some one would look at these accounts, if they are thought not to be right. When I returned there was £58 in the chest.

"It may be said, 'You must have impoverished these men; you are keeping them just above starving point; with this expenditure they must be depressed.' O that in my native country the labouring population were half as well off as they are in my adopted country—I mean in Jamaica! I pity from my soul their condition, and detest that economy which points to them as exhibiting the amount of happiness that the labouring man ought to possess. Let us try this by another test. It was said, that we should ruin the country by establishing free villages. The fact is, the planters have come and thanked me for it. They have said, 'Mr. Knibb, you are right after all.' One of the civil questions put to my brethren was this: 'How many persons in your church and congregation have purchased land? and what is the amount paid for the same? how many have erected, or are now erecting, dwelling-houses on their freeholds, and at what cost?' We took great pains to ascertain this, and here is the result. In the Western Union alone (and the other books are coming home), since that glorious act which made us men, among the despised, and robbed, and downcast baptists, three thousand seven hundred persons have already purchased that by which they have acquired the elective franchise; they have purchased this at the cost price, and have paid for it. If you ask how we know it, I reply, we took the trouble of searching their titles; we do not think it beneath us to give a few hours to these things, though we rob 'Nature's sweet restorer' in order to do it. They have paid for this the sum of £33,013 sterling, and in this I do not include Mr. Burchell's account. What have they done with their land? One thousand six hundred and eighty-three of them have built neat little cottages. In these hallowed spots shall never again be set the tyrant's foot, and, by the blessing of God, there poverty, with her withering blast, can never come. These erections have cost the sum of £48,127; so that, while we have spent £80,000 in building houses for God, the people, who have contributed £60,000, have spent £81,240, to build free cottages for themselves."

The peroration of this address was somewhat long and desultory. It will suffice to take from it the following extracts:—

"And now in drawing to a close, I hope that if I have not stated what must exculpate my brethren, even in the view of those who may not be of us, I shall receive a full justification for not needlessly speaking about others. This I determined on my knees this morning not to do; and being solicited by the honoured individual at whose house I was staying to conduct the family worship, I chose that beautiful hymn—

"When free from envy, scorn, and strife,
Our wishes all above,
Each can a brother's failings hide,
And show a brother's love.'

Conscious of innumerable deficiencies, looking for mercy through the blood of the Lamb, I hope that in defending my brethren, who are dear to me as life itself, and in laying before you a plain, unvarnished statement of the beloved people of my charge, I have not unnecessarily exposed any individual. If I have, I sincerely regret it. Our accusers are good men. I believe them to be mistaken; and when they have had as many trials as I have, when domestic affliction has bowed them down as it has me, when the delight of their eyes has been taken away just as it was budding into life, when a gaol has immured them, and at the bar of their country they have had to endure the scoffs of sinners—then will they tenderly regard the character of every missionary that breathes. It is all he has. Take that away from him, and he sinks at once; wealth cannot support him, and talent only makes his fall more conspicuous; but so long as his character is unimpeached, he may bid defiance to every foe on earth, and to every devil in hell. I know I speak strongly. I am aware of my failing; but I have been in the hot-bed of slavery for years, and though the east wind blew as I landed on your coast, it has not quite cooled me.

"Seventeen years have I been labouring in the once slave, but now free-cultured islands of the west,—one third of the jubilee you are to celebrate; and still, by the blessing of God, in the full vigour of my natural strength I appear before you. The sun has not smitten me by day, the moon has not withered my constitution by night; while frequently in the lowly hut have I sat with the beloved members of my church, or in the great congregation have proclaimed to them the unsearchable riches of Christ. And I say you have an ample reward. I feel that I have. I pay a debt of gratitude to this society. When I was but a stripling, unschooled by your academics and untutored in your seats of learning, you accounted me worthy, and sending me forth on your embassy of mercy. To any individuals here coming forward to embark in the same cause I say, Remember, if I possess anything, it has been acquired by cherishing—I shall cherish it till I expire, and go where it is in perfection—an unconquerable enmity to every form and vestige of tyranny that exists.

"And now perhaps you will say, 'The work is done.' No; we have everything to do. We know not how you look upon us, but we consider ourselves only as pioneers in the work. We know that many forms of error will arise, unless we carefully watch against them. The apostle Paul could not prevent error from creeping into the church at Corinth; and do you think that William Knibb can do it at Falmouth? The apostle Peter could not do it; and do you think that brother Burchell can? But both Paul and Knibb, Peter and Burchell, wish to turn it out as fast as the devil puts it in.

"May I refer you to one circumstance, that will teach you that our people can feel as well as talk? I know it is of a personal character, but it arises out of the circumstances connected with this discussion. When I laid a report before the members of my church, read the title deeds of the chapels, and stated that all those chapels that were out of debt were vested in trustees; and when they found that the house in which I lived, the bed on which I reposed, and the furniture which I used, was not my property, but theirs, and belonged entirely to the church, they said, 'Minister, have you took care and got a house for your wife?' I said, 'No: do you think that I would take your money without your leave, and buy a house for Mrs. Knibb?' They replied, 'If you have not got one, it is time you had. You go to Kettering, to the land left that belongs to you, and you build a good house there, and we will pay for it.' I took them at their word. I set to work instantly; for Edward Barrett, whom you know, one of those so calumniated—that good man tells me that he has every reason to believe that he has been the instrument of bringing six hundred souls to Christ—Edward Barrett said, 'Set about it soon, minister; you may cut, (that is, I might die,) and we cannot bear the thought that your wife should go home; let her stop here.' I built the house, and it cost £1000 sterling; and as soon as it was completed, I assigned it over to Mrs. Knibb and our dear children, because I was determined not to hold property there. Now, ought such persons to be defamed? If they have a few foibles, or do something wrong, ought they to be stigmatized? I ask whether human nature does not rise in indignation against it? But we will repress the feeling. 'Father, forgive them; for they know not what they do.'

"We ask you to extend your sympathies towards us. We have our class-leaders, and we intend to keep them. I have made a calculation, and I am sure we have six hundred good men and women that conduct our class-meetings. They have built the prayer-houses; they have furnished them with benches; and I have the pleasure of knowing that every Monday night sixty prayer-meetings are held, to pray that God would bless the word preached on the preceding day.

"Some missionaries have stated that we have been giving the people so much power that we shall lose our own. Let them have it. I am not afraid of being thought little among them. I have frequently said to them, 'The moment you can find a man of colour or a black man fit to take the pulpit—and I hope that will be before these brown hairs become grey—I shall have great pleasure in hearing him preach the unsearchable riches of Christ.'

"Farewell! My heart is in Jamaica, while my affections are enkindled here. I think every sabbath a blank that I cannot preach to those who have been so traduced; but soon shall I be there. When I carry, as I think I shall, your approbation of our conduct, my brethren will make no exultation. We will meet at the mercy-seat; we will bless that God who has again shielded our heads in the day of battle; and rising, nerved with fresh strength, and clothed with fresh armour, we will try to capture some of the other islands of the West, and bring them as trophies to the Redeemer's feet."

This speech, which occupied more than two hours in the delivery, was heard throughout with the deepest interest, and its various passages were received with plaudits which evinced that in the opinion of the meeting the vindication was complete. Among the immediate effects of it was this, that although Knibb had risen formally to second a motion proposed by Mr. Leslie on another subject, a resolution was drafted on the platform to the following effect:—

"That this meeting unite in the expression of lively gratitude to God, for the kind protection afforded to their beloved missionaries now on the platform in their return on this occasion to their native land, and receive them with the warmest affection; and they especially seize the present moment to renew the assurances of their unabated confidence in the Christian character and fidelity of their missionaries in Jamaica, and to cheer them amidst their new trials and continued toils with their sympathy and unfaltering support."

Immediately on Knibb's sitting down this resolution was proposed by Dr. Steane, and seconded by Dr. Campbell, a short extract from whose address on the occasion will convey better than any other words the tone of the hour. He said —

"I really feel so excited, so delighted, so exhausted, that I am perfectly unable to proceed. I feel myself placed in the happy position in which counsel sometimes find themselves, when they simply have to appear before a judge, as I appear before you, Mr. Chairman, and call for a verdict without any argumentation. The case is closed for the defendant, the speech is made—a speech worth crossing the seas to make, and, I would add, a speech worth crossing the ocean to hear. Since the commencement of modern missions there has been no such speech, considering it in its length and breadth, in the bearing of its statistics, and in the exhibition of its facts. It will be some time before you hear another like it. I hate long speeches; and therefore I would just put two or three questions. First,—Is, or is not, your confidence shaken in your West Indian missionaries? (General cries of 'No, no.') The second question is,—As stewards, do you believe that they have, or have not, conducted themselves with Christian fidelity? (Loud cries of 'They have.') I stand here as the devoted friend of the London Missionary Society, although at the same time as your friend, and as the friend of truth and justice; and I say with confidence, that I speak the sentiments and feelings of the immense mass of the directors, subscribers, and supporters of the London Missionary Society. The London Missionary Society is no party to this movement. You ought not, and I clearly perceive you do not, identify societies with individuals. It were unkind to do so; it were unjust; it were cruel!

"Is there a man here that ever doubted the integrity of the West Indian missionaries? I never did. I never had one moment's misgiving. I knew the missionaries were men, and had to act on persons whom pretended Christian and civilized men had crushed down to the earth, and done everything to brutalize. I knew that, for some time, there might be a number of little things offensive to the fastidious taste and the morbid delicacy of the men of this country, who demand that even a victim shall writhe with grace, and groan with melody, and do all manner of things in an old-practised way; but I knew that, like liquors in a state of fermentation, which heave and are agitated, but in due time throw off their refuse, till at length they are rendered both clear and pure, negro society would rise in character, and ultimately clothe itself with the comely garb of Christian civilization."

When the resolution was put from the chair the whole audience immediately rose, and affirmed it with loud and long continued applause.

Deeply touched as he must have been by this demonstration, Knibb again rose, and uttered a few sentences, among which were the following: —

> "My respected friends, on behalf of my dear brethren and myself I return you thanks. I rejoice in this testimonial, however, not only on my own account, and on that of my beloved brethren in Jamaica, but still more because I see in it the healing of those differences which have unhappily existed. I shall now go home with a grateful heart. Yet, if I did not think that God approved the decision of this meeting, O how little would it be worth! Farewell, beloved friends, for a little time. Our next meeting may be in the jubilee of the world."

If I were to express a critical opinion of the manner in which Knibb executed the duty entrusted to him—that namely, of vindicating the aspersed character of the baptist missionaries in Jamaica, I should say that he did it with generous fidelity and great skill. To effect a thorough, business-like vindication of them he was obviously not prepared, and if his case had been gone into with a searching hand, it must in some parts have broken down. I do not for a moment insinuate that this would have arisen from the unsoundness of any part of it; but it must of necessity have resulted from the incompleteness of his information. From his letters it is manifest that he felt the indispensable importance of being well furnished with facts, and the circular which he addressed to the brethren was well adapted to obtain for him the information he required.

To this circular, however, a considerable proportion of the brethren sent him no reply; a piece of negligence which no consideration can excuse, and which, if it had induced him to abandon their defence, would have produced no unnatural result. What else could counsel do, when sent into court without a brief? It is a trait of Knibb's characteristic generosity that he did not take such a course. He told neither the committee nor the public anything of his brethren's neglect. He said that, while some returns had been forwarded by him, he did not doubt that the rest would be sent by Mr. Philippo, who was to leave the island shortly after him; an exercise of confidence which, sincere as it probably was, was not justified by the result. In his speech at Exeter Hall he made use of the materials which he had, without taking any notice of their incompleteness. To the charge that the missionaries published no accounts, his reply was, "Here then are mine, and I will publish every item of them:" an answer, no doubt, perfect as to himself, but of no force on behalf of his brethren. Had he been asked, "Where are the accounts of the other stations?" he could have given none but the damaging answer, "I have not been supplied with them." That in such circumstances his defence was triumphant was owing partly to his pleading before friendly judges, partly to the unbounded confidence reposed in him that he would not have become the advocate of a bad cause, and partly to the enthusiastic sympathy which he had always the power of kindling by his eloquence in the breasts of his auditors. The case of all his brethren may have been as good as his own, and I am far from insinuating that it was not so; but it must not be taken unkind if I say, that some of them had the benefit at that time of a defence not founded upon facts which they had supplied, and that it is consequently the more incumbent on them to furnish by their subsequent course the demonstration which was then withheld.

The reader cannot but have been struck with Knibb's resolute abstinence, both at this meeting and throughout the whole of this trying controversy, from any public expressions of censure towards his accusers. His letters make it plain that this did not arise, either from his not thinking them wrong, or from his not feeling very acutely their conduct; and, since no one will impute it to fear, I do him no more than obvious justice in ascribing it wholly to moral and religious causes. He was silent under no ordinary amount of provocation, because he loved his brethren, and the cause with which they were identified, too much to allow himself to speak. His generous nature shines out in this fact, as well as his vigorous piety. The course he adopted, however, was as politic as it was magnanimous. It aided his object, while it won him admiration.

The speech which Knibb delivered on this occasion was not only reported at length in the *Patriot* of the day, but published by himself almost *verbatim* from the report, with the money accounts which he had presented at the meeting in full detail, and a list of the free villages and settlements, stating the number of persons and houses at each, together with the value of the houses and land. Annexed are also sixteen wood-engravings of chapels in Jamaica, with explanatory and statistical notes, and an engraving of the premises purchased at Calabar for the theological institution. Prefixed to this publication is a letter to W. B. Gurney, Esq., as treasurer to the society, in which, after a few explanatory sentences, he gives the following general view of the case: —

"It is very possible, that in so large a sphere of labour, with such a lamentable want of missionaries, evils may exist in some of the distant churches. It is also possible that some of my brethren, and that I myself, may not always have acted with that discretion that should ever mark the conduct of a servant of Christ. It would have been a marvel had it been otherwise. To the praise of perfection we lay no claim; but we deem it not inconsistent with Christian meekness to demand credit for good intentions. Those who have much to do may possibly do something wrong; and those who labour in the midst of adversaries will have their errors magnified. From the first our work has been arduous; it was once also perilous: it is now safe, but still it is difficult. The wounds which the slavery of ages has inflicted on humanity are not soon healed. The cure is, nevertheless, begun, and advancing with a rapidity unknown in modern times. We do hope that our brethren who have deemed it their duty to decry our labours will at length return to a better mind, that they will henceforth let inquiry go before judgment, and reflect that a system which has failed in their hands may yet succeed in those of others. We further hope they will remember, that success in the things of God is *matter of fact,* and not of *opinion.* It will surely be granted, that if only half the facts in the following speech be true, a mighty work has been performed—a work strongly demonstrative of the divine presence with the instruments employed in it; but if ALL be true, may we not exclaim, 'What hath God wrought!' Our accusers will do well to reflect on the words of Gamaliel:—'Refrain from these men, and let them alone; for if this counsel and this work be of men, it will come to nought: but if it be of God, ye cannot overthrow it; lest haply ye be found even to fight against God.'"

With respect to the formation of classes and the appointment of class-leaders in the churches, which by the presbyterian and independent missionaries had been vehemently complained of, Knibb did not content himself with mere vindication; he recommended the plan to the adoption of his brethren in England. At the close of his letter to Mr. Gurney in particular, he expresses his earnest desire to this effect. This is not the place for argument on such a subject, but I cannot content myself without saying that I am not prepared to concur in this recommendation.

On the 30th of April, two days after the meeting at which he had so strenuously exerted himself, Knibb, in writing to his wife, spoke of his success in the following terms:—"I have now been one week in England, and I am sure when I tell you what has been accomplished, you will adoringly acknowledge the hand of Him who has so much blessed the feeble agency employed. When I arrived, a pamphlet by Mr. Barrett, some remarks of the editor of the Evangelical Magazine, and the Scotch people, had produced an impression on the public mind of the most unfavourable character, so much so that even our committee were fearful of the result. I spoke at Exeter Hall two hours and a quarter. All attempts to describe the sensation produced would fail; I never saw anything to equal it. It was I assure you a hard day's work."

"The Scotch people," however, were not tranquillized by his triumph at Exeter Hall. Mr. Blyth now formally preferred accusations, and declared himself ready to support them in the presence of a public meeting, at which Knibb, on the other part, was invited to attend. Knibb's actual attendance at such a meeting was prevented only by the necessity of his return to Jamaica; but his place was kindly and ably filled at two meetings which were subsequently held in Edinburgh, by Mr. Watson, one of the pastors of the baptist church in Elder Street, in that city, and by Mr. Saffery, a service for which warm thanks are due to them. Mr. Blyth ventured so far as to accuse Knibb of falsehood, because he had spoken of himself as having been immured within the walls of a gaol. "Mr. Knibb," said Mr. Blyth, "never was in gaol."

In the letter Mr. Blyth was correct. Knibb had been only under arrest, in the court-house at Montego Bay; but what can be thought of an opponent who makes such a latitude of expression as this, especially occurring as it did in moments of high excitement, the ground of a serious imputation on the speaker's veracity? Knibb referred to this charge with evident sensitiveness, in his valedictory address at Finsbury Chapel; and one could have wished nothing more than that his accuser had been there, to witness the indignant response of the auditory.

On the day following the annual meeting Knibb met the committee, when they agreed at his request to send out five more missionaries to Jamaica, "on the understanding that they could be supported there," and offered to bear his expenses, if on his return he should be able to visit Barbados, St. Vincent's, or other islands, with a view to missionary enterprize. They agreed also to meet the expense of purchasing and fitting up premises at Calabar for a theological institution, and they requested him to lay before them in writing his general views in relation to mission work in the west.

At this period he wrote to the members of the churches at Falmouth and Refuge; but the letter, although admirable, so nearly resembles those which have been already introduced, that I decline its insertion.

It was in this year, 1842, that the Jubilee of the Baptist Missionary Society was celebrated, and it was one of the undesigned advantages of Knibb's present visit to England that it enabled him to participate in the pleasures, and to aid in the labours of the season. The principal service was held at Kettering, Northamptonshire, on Wednesday, the first of June. Interesting on many grounds as the occasion was, it was to many one of its principal attractions that Knibb was there; and exciting as it truly was to all, it was perhaps to him more exciting than to any other person. In his case more of the heart's chords were struck than in that of any other individual. Like many besides, he was there as a public man, prominent in the mission, and warmly devoted to it; but there were thoughts which no one had in common with him. To him Kettering was not merely the scene of the missionary jubilee; it was the place of his birth and his childhood. He walked over the smooth road-side on which he had so often won marbles from his playfellows, and passed by the passage in which he had learned his lesson when taking shelter from the rain. He saw the house in which his parents had lived, and looked in at the window from which his mother had addressed to him her parting words. He went with his two girls to the churchyard to hold weeping converse with the dead; and then called on the living to shed scarcely fewer or less tender tears. He and his twin sister first, then he and his Sunday-school teacher, wept in admiring gratitude together; and those who were most in his company on the occasion testify, that his whole soul was expanded and glowing beyond the power of expression.

While thus revelling in the luxury of private and domestic affections, Knibb entered fully into the public sympathies of the time, and contributed his full share to the interest of the proceedings. He was always willing to oblige, and he was ready at every call. When it was found necessary, on account of the overflowing multitude, to open other places of meeting, no one would go unless it was announced that Knibb would be there. Accordingly he went from place to place, making a speech at each, and gratifying all. The obliging spirit he thus manifested is matter of high commendation: the physical energy and speaking tact he exhibited are matter of almost boundless admiration.

After attending the meeting at Kettering, he proceeded to a similar meeting at Birmingham. He attended others also, at Bristol and elsewhere. On reviewing his reported speeches on these occasions I do not find any passages for extract. Having no particular point to which to speak, his matter consisted chiefly of general references comparatively unimportant to a biographer, while all that related to the facts of his history has been better told elsewhere. It is enough to say that he everywhere touched the topics of the hour with a characteristic hand, and everywhere afforded unmingled gratification.

In April of this year the House of Commons had appointed a select committee to inquire into the state of the West Indian colonies, in relation to labour, wages, and other matters connected with their agricultural economy; and as a witness in relation to Jamaica, Knibb was called before them. He was examined on the 30th of June. It is no disparagement to him to say that his evidence on this occasion was not so effective as that which he gave in 1832. He was then charged with facts of tremendous power, his acquaintance with which was intimate, and the simple narration of which was decisive. The case was different now. The inquiries of the committee were directed to points, the solution of which required on the one hand a practical knowledge of agriculture which he did not possess, and on the other an acquaintance with political economy to which he had not devoted himself.

In May he attended the annual meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and made a speech of which I have given by anticipation a considerable portion at the close of the preceding chapter. Two short extracts I must make room for here. He began his speech by referring to a statement made at an earlier part of the meeting by Dr. Lushington, in the following terms :—

> "If there has been one sentiment that has fallen with a more deadening sound on my ears than any other in the whole of this discussion, to which I have listened with much attention, it was that which fell from the lips of Dr. Lushington when he asserted that, in the English House of Commons, the subject of slavery palled upon the taste. I thought that a severer rebuke, or one more calculated to sink that legislative body in the esteem of the wise and the just, could not possibly have been uttered. I most earnestly hope that legislative body, if they wish to have the respect of those whose respect is worth obtaining, will by some act of theirs show, that if that rebuke is now just, it shall no longer be so. I should almost feel disgraced in bearing the name of a Briton if I could believe, that when there was something to be done, or something implored to be done, for the miseries of men, the subject palled upon the taste of an assembly by which the feelings of Britons should be represented. I sincerely trust that, if this be the case, the people of England will show that they are not contented with such a state of things. For myself, nevertheless, I have little hope from anything, except it be from Christian effort. If, however, we can but engage the concurrent efforts of those who feel interested, not merely in the freedom of earth, but in freedom eternal in the skies, soon the last despot shall relax his grasp, and the last slave shall be free."

He closed his address with the following burning words :—

> "I ask the meeting not to allow the government to be palmed upon by those who think they can reduce the negroes to serfs. They cannot, and they shall not, for we have a mountain-top to which to flee. We have already suffered enough. They shall not

extinguish the ethereal light which now beams on the islands of the west. Come what will, we will be free, and enjoy the blessing which God has given us."

In the course of this visit, he had the high gratification of witnessing the Christian profession of his eldest daughter, Catherine. He baptized her on the 10th of June, with six other persons, at Salem Chapel, Brixton Hill, after preaching from the words, "Occupy till I come." "More than a hundred members of different churches," says he, "came to witness and partake of our joy. It was a truly delightful, soul-refreshing time, especially at the Lord's supper. Dear Ann," he adds, "wept as if her heart would break."

On the 1st of July a public meeting was held at Finsbury Chapel, London, to bid him farewell, and a valedictory address was delivered to him by Dr. Godwin, of Oxford. On the 2nd he sailed from Southampton, in the Dee.

The following extracts from letters to his children written during the voyage, will give the reader a sufficient idea of it.

TO HIS DAUGHTERS CATHERINE AND ANN.

"*Off the Isle of Wight, July* 1, 1842.

"I felt deeply at parting with you this morning, but it was my duty to do so, and you, I hope, know that every duty ought to be pleasant. I have been much pleased with both of you; your general conduct has gratified a father's heart, and he hopes and prays that you both ere long may be the decided followers of the blessed Jesus. When you return to school I hope you will strive hard to improve, not merely for our sakes, but for your own, that thus, should God spare you, you may be usefully employed in his kingdom. Farewell, my dear girls. Live near to God, and you must be happy. That the God of missions may be your God is my fervent prayer."

"*Off Falmouth, July* 2, 1842.

"My heart yearns over you both with fond affection. To recognize in you both the sincere and humble followers of the Lamb is my only desire, and this desire I hope fully to realize. My dear Kate has publicly given herself to Jesus, and I hope that the work of grace has really commenced in my beloved Ann. Pray much with each other, and for each other. Live near to God in prayer, and your present and your eternal happiness is secured.

"And now, my dear girls, farewell. May religion be your early, your daily choice. Should it please God to spare you to us and us to you, I look forward with great joy to the time when we shall have you at Kettering; when, in your Christian character, both I and your dear mother will have an ample reward for all the anxieties and toils we have had to endure."

"*July* 6.

"We are now safely at anchor in the beautiful harbour of Corunna, and have taken a tour of the town, which, for a Spanish town, is clean and passable. I visited the tomb of Sir John Moore, which is kept surrounded by flowers, and the garden is kept in repair by the voluntary donations of travellers; to which subscription I gave in memory of the fallen soldier, and inserted my name. In the History of England you will find an account of this transaction, and when reading it, remember that your father has visited the spot, seen from a distance the battle-field, and stood near the tomb of the departed warrior, hoping for the time to come when men shall learn war no more. The streets in Corunna are narrow and badly paved, the shops mean and showy, and the houses adorned with counterpanes, and other bed-gear, hung out of the upper windows. The religion is catholic, in all its disgusting nonsense; and in the cathedral, where black and white saints, roses and burning oil, were jumbled together, the poor devotees were paying their devotions to their images. One old woman, very devout, had a white hen, which appeared equally engaged in the senseless idolatry. The people were generally ill clad, impudent beggars. Fruit was plentiful; and in a neat little warehouse, near to the tomb of Sir J. Moore, I regaled myself with some cherries and strawberries. With us sailed two Spanish princes, one about to marry the queen of Spain, and they were landed with rockets blazing, guns firing, bells ringing; and to-night a grand illumination, we are informed, is to take place in honour of this prince of beggars, for really I never saw such poverty and meanness in my life."

"*July* 22.—About six o'clock this evening we cast anchor in the lovely bay of Clarence, off Bridgetown in Barbados, and I have been on shore. In the year 1831 this place was visited by a dreadful hurricane, which destroyed most of the town, and killed many hundreds of its inhabitants. Marks of the fury of the storm were very visible, but the evening closed in so soon that I was unable to see much of the town. I called upon the editor of the *Liberal*, a newspaper advocating the liberty of man, and spent a few minutes very interestingly with him. He has just lost a dear little girl, so that it was the house of mourning. He had a sweet little girl left, about the age of Fanny, with whom I was much pleased.

"It is now Saturday morning, and we are off St. Lucia. . . . I could not land at St. Lucia, but the scenery from the sea was very interesting; and with the aid of a glass the different trees were easily distinguished. At twelve the same evening we were at Martinique, a bold, lofty, and mountainous island, belonging to the French, with a neat sea-port town. Here slavery exists in all its horrors, and I stood on the deck, my heart yearned over the unhappy victims of cruelty bound by man's tyranny, as while the full beams of the moon cast a soft light on the fields cultivated by their unrequited toil. At five on sabbath morning we were at Dominica, where there is a neat town, and the towering mountains, beautifully cultivated, with their summits wrapped in clouds, gave a beauty to the scene I shall not soon forget. From my cabin window I could see the whole. This island is under the dominion of England, and is consequently free. At twelve o'clock on the sabbath we made Guadeloupe, and entered the roadstead of Basseterre. The town appeared very neat from the harbour, while lofty and majestic mountains towered immediately behind, whose summits were wrapped in clouds, and from one of which a beautiful stream of water issued to fertilize the plain. The scene was beautifully grand. Here, too, that withering curse—slavery—riots on the hopes of man; enough, in my estimation, to cast a shade over any prospect, however otherwise enchanting.

"*Monday morning, July* 25.—We are now at anchor at Antigua, where I have been on shore, and breakfasted with the respected Wesleyan missionary who resides at this place, Bridgetown. The methodists here have a beautiful chapel, with a school-room beneath. Much did I enjoy an hour's chat and a breakfast with these disciples of the blessed Jesus. About three o'clock we passed the ill-fated spot where, a few years since, seven Wesleyan missionaries were lost in the mail-boat. On the reef there are several trees similar to the cypress, blooming as if in sad remembrance of the trying dispensation to which I have referred. We passed Nevis and St. Kitt's in the evening, landed mails, and are now proceeding on to St. Thomas, *via* Tortola. Now, my dear girls, take your maps, and you will readily trace the voyage of your father hitherto. At St. Kitt's is a high volcanic mountain, formerly called Mount Misery, but now Mount Freedom, in commemoration of the emancipation of the slaves."

"*Off Turks Island, July* 30, 1842.

"At St. Thomas's I visited one of the Moravian missionary settlements, and went to the simple and unadorned grave-yard, where twelve missionaries, twelve wives, and eighteen children sleep till the resurrection morn. It is a hallowed spot, and speaks in solemn tones, 'Work while it is called to-day.' Fain would I learn this important lesson, and act upon it, till my Father shall say, 'Come up hither, and enter into the joy of thy Lord.' While in St. Thomas's I saw enough of slavery to make my heart bleed, while the immorality of the slaves, especially of the boys and girls, filled me with distress. They appear to be entirely uninstructed, and as wicked as ignorance will enable them to be. O that God in his mercy may visit them!

"*August* 2.—We sailed from St. Thomas's on Friday at noon, and about the same time on Sunday made Turks Island, from whence we were transshipped on board the Tay. Brother Littlewood was soon on board, and after a short time I landed amidst the kind congratulations of the people, who treated me as their deliverer from slavery. I could not stop many minutes on shore, but hope ere long to pay this interesting people another visit. Mrs. Littlewood was very ill, but I hope not dangerously so, though she had been at the point of death. At a short distance from this place one of the steam ships was totally lost a few months ago. I saw the wreck, the sea breaking over her. O what gratitude is due to Him who has hitherto kept me as in the hollow of his hand!

"On Monday morning, the glorious first of August, about six o'clock, I went on shore at St. Domingo, at Cape Haytien, the scene, as my dear girls will remember, of the awful earthquake in May of this year. I think I shall never forget the awful desolation that reigned. Cape Haytien must have been a splendid town, as the ruins show how great has been the damage done. In the centre of the town stood, in a large square, the column of liberty, now broken in two, the fountain still sending forth a clear stream of water. On one side was the house of the president of the island, on another a magnificent cathedral, on another houses of the first respectability, and at right angles were streets from half a mile in length — all one mass of ruins. Beneath these ruins still lie entombed more than three thousand victims. I went over the whole. As I stood on the massive ruins of the cathedral, feelings which I cannot express came over my mind; temporary graves, broken furniture of all kinds, falling ruins, one mass of desolation spread out on every hand. I saw and spoke to a few who were left among the ruins; they were very civil, and had commenced erecting huts close by the ruins of the doomed and devoted city. Except the custom-house there is not a house left standing, and that is rent in the centre, from the roof to the foundation. Among the ruins I saw a black woman suckling her twin children as if nothing had happened; of another I purchased three pine apples for fourpence to quench my thirst; and fatigued (for the heat was intense), but deeply interested, I regained the vessel in three hours, having brought away some fragments of the ruins of one of the first cities in the western Archipelago. The castle of Christopher, on the summit of an immense mountain, is nearly destroyed. In the course of the day we passed other places where numbers had perished in this awful visitation of Providence.

"*August* 2.—Your father is now in the harbour of St. Iago de Cuba. The town looks neat from the ship, but slavery in its worst horrors is here, and I shall not pollute my feet by landing. The entrance by the castle is fine, and the panorama of mountains truly enchanting; but your father says, and so will his girls,—

'The land for me, the land for me,
Where every living soul is free,
Where the wind may blow, and tornadoes rave;
But the tyrant no longer holds a slave.'"

I must add to these extracts one from a letter written to Mr. Angus, as more immediately touching missionary affairs:—

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Steam Ship Dee, Caribbean Sea, July* 26, 1842.

"We made Barbados on the evening of the 22nd, when I immediately went on shore. From the information I collected during the brief detention of the vessel, there appears to be a very promising opening to commence a mission in that island. I was informed by Mr. Prescod, that Bridgetown and its immediate vicinity contained full thirty thousand inhabitants, and that all the places of worship in the place would not accommodate five thousand persons. He said that premises could very easily be procured. He urged me to commence a mission, offered any assistance in his power, and said that much opposition might be expected at first, but that there was need of further religious instruction. I assure you I longed to proclaim the unsearchable riches of Christ. I promised (D. V.) to return in a few months, and as you will have time to answer this ere I reach that island, you will give me your thoughts on this matter. In consequence of the steam ship Clyde getting ashore and not being at Barbados on our arrival, we were ordered to take the mail to the northern islands, which prevented my visiting St. Vincent's and Grenada. At the former of these a mission, I am given to understand, could easily be founded, and the communication from Barbados to these islands and to Trinidad is very easy. The same circumstance will prevent my reaching Jamaica by the first of August, which I deeply regret, as I had hoped on that day to have made an effort for the jubilee fund. However, I have done my best to accomplish what I had so much at heart, and now it is my duty cheerfully to submit to the dispensation of Providence by which I am prevented from accomplishing what I desired."

To the information furnished by these extracts, I have to add this only, that on visiting the island of St. Thomas, his heart glowed with indignation on ascertaining that the Moravian missionaries were slaveholders. He sent home an account of this fact both to Mr. Angus and Mr. Sturge, pressing an immediate publication of the statement, with his name. I believe that only a private use was made of this communication: and I am happy to feel myself released from all obligation to make it public, by the fact, to which I refer with great pleasure, that the slaves formerly held by the Moravian missionaries in St. Thomas's have been set free, and that the brethren are no longer exposed to censure in this matter.

◆

CHAPTER XVII.

HIS LABOURS IN JAMAICA FROM 1842 TO 1845.

Knibb arrived in safety at Kettering on the evening of the 4th of August, 1842, and found his family in health, and his church in peace.

It had been determined by the churches of the Western Union that there should be a celebration of the missionary jubilee in Jamaica, and that it should be held at Kettering, on the 5th and 6th of October. It was, of course, Knibb's first concern to forward the preparations for such a gathering, and both ingenuity and activity must have been put largely into requisition, in order to provide, in such a spot, several days' entertainment for twelve thousand human beings and two thousand horses. The thing was, however, accomplished. For the auditory a booth was erected, in length two hundred feet and in breadth a hundred and fifty, well roofed with cocoa-nut leaves as a defence from the sun, and richly ornamented with branches, banners, and paintings. This was calculated to accommodate eight thousand persons, and it is said that nine thousand pressed into it. Here at early morn was held a prayer-meeting of fifteen hundred persons; at another hour a double line of children passed through one of the avenues, singing, "We're bound for Canaan's land;" but at eleven o'clock in the forenoon of the 6th of October was the grand meeting. Mr. Burchell, as the senior missionary, presided. After various speeches, to which it is not within my province more particularly to refer, Knibb rose and addressed the assembly.

The resolution he had to propose related to American slavery, a subject on which his heart was always glowing, and his tongue always eloquent. He by no means confined himself, however, to the topic assigned him. There was much else that he had to say, and the opportunity was a highly favourable one for saying it. It was natural that he should speak of his recent visit to England, and of his successful vindication of his brethren there. "It had been said that the baptist missionary ship would soon go down," said he; "but she has been hauled up and thoroughly examined, and declared to be A 1." He could not refrain from a passing reference to the aspersions which had created the necessity for his voyage; but he contented himself with representing the retailers of them as making themselves "the scavengers of the churches," and with wishing them a better office. Much kindness had been shown by his neighbours generally in the preparations necessary for the meeting, and he thus handsomely made his acknowledgments: —

> "I publicly express my thanks to the overseers and attorneys of the neighbourhood, for the great kindness they have displayed on this occasion, by assisting in various ways. It has taught me a lesson. It has satisfied me that the efforts made by a licentious press to prejudice the planting interest against the baptist missionaries have had no effect. It is to them I owe the bringing up to this spot nearly every one of the cocoa-nut branches which cover the tent, together with the lumber with which it is erected, and the benches on which we sit. I owe to their kindness also the water which we have to drink, and the use of the cattle-pens for five

miles round for our horses. If these accommodations had not been afforded, the jubilee services could not have been conveniently held."

Seeing an auditory which, from its immense magnitude, must of necessity be of a very mixed character, and observing among them some magistrates and influential planters, he thought it a good opportunity of saying a word in relation to what was called the "baptist influence" over the labourers. "Notwithstanding all the abuse that has been heaped upon us, and upon our churches," said he, "the baptist missionaries are not inimical to the welfare of the island. I am not afraid to compare the peasantry of Jamaica, not even those who have been most under baptist influence, with those of any part of the world. How is it, I ask, that just in proportion as the peasantry of the island are under baptist influence is the quantity of sugar made? If this is not the fact, now is the time to contradict it."

After this he proceeded to speak of the labouring class at large, in a manner adapted to engage for them the kindness of considerate employers. These were his words: —

"I entreat you, my friends, not to believe every report industriously circulated against the peasantry. It is not to be supposed that there are no failings among them. Where, I ask, can a set of men be found that have none? But they have nobly borne up against the insults with which they have been loaded, and their conduct has been such as ought to have put to shame their calumniators and detractors. The Jamaica press has done more than anything else to injure the island. It has uttered the vilest slanders. It is filthy, slimy, polluted. But, much as it has been said we are hated by the planting interest, I know there are many who are not influenced by the reports of the press. There may be much remaining that is wrong; but who can expect a deep stagnant pool to be filled up at once? I am astonished that so much has been accomplished in so short a space of time; and I am sure nothing is wanted but suitable measures to secure, not only liberty, but the successful cultivation of the soil."

Some additional particulars of the day will be found in the following extract of a letter to Mr. Angus: —

TO MR. ANGUS.

" *Kettering, Oct.* 14, 1842.

" We needed not a single policeman. We lost not a single fork or spoon, though the house was like an open tavern for four days; and though the meeting was full four hours' long, not more than three of the immense mass assembled left their seats. I did long that you could see it. Really it was overpowering. The dark days of slavery passed in review, the present joyous scene was in triumphant contrast, and tears alone relieved the overflowings of joy. Several of the people had walked nearly sixty miles to be present; and the happiness they evinced, the joy they expressed, and the mutual congratulations that were uttered, amply repaid us for all the toil in getting up the necessary apparatus for the glorious scene. Several magistrates and influential planters were present, and appeared much to enjoy the scene. On the Thursday full five hundred of our deacons and leaders were assembled, and a more interesting spectacle has seldom been presented, than when it was my happiness, at the request of my brethren, to address them on the important position they occupied, and on the duties devolving upon them in reference to the extension of the gospel, and the abolition of slavery throughout the world. My address occupied more than an hour; and I wish, for the sake of the great cause, that I could remember it sufficiently to have it printed for circulation in the island. I wish distinctly to record the great kindness I received from the managers of the neighbouring estates. Without fee or reward they cheerfully brought up all the lumber, full 10,000 feet, eight miles, to assist in the erection of the tent, and sent from their estates, in wains and carts, cocoa-nut leaves enough to cover the whole of it. About five hundred people belonging to Refuge church gave a day, cutting down more than a hundred trees on Kettering land, and sawing them into logs for seats, or posts for the support of the roof. In the kindness I have received, both from the managers and peasants, you have the result of the abominable attempts that have been made to injure our usefulness, and destroy our reputation.

"The ordinance of the Lord's supper closed the delightful jubilee at Kettering, where many of the missionary band communed with about four thousand of the children of Ethiopia. This meeting had been larger, but the supply of food in the village failed, and many were thus obliged to return home."

In referring to this meeting in a letter to Mr. Sturge, dated the 12th of December, he says, "At our meeting at Kettering for the celebration of the jubilee of our mission, at the request of my brethren I addressed the deacons and leaders of the assembled churches on the necessity of promoting the cultivation of the soil, and I have reason for believing that good has been the result." He adds, "When the living mass rose to sing,

'Thus far the Lord hath led us on,
Let us look back the road to view,'

it was too much to bear. The remembrance of the past—the aspect of the present—the hope of the future—all conspired to fill the soul with adoring gratitude and ardent love. They came from distances of ten, twenty, thirty, forty, fifty, sixty, and seventy miles; and the universal joy that prevailed, chastened by piety, was a glorious recompence for all the trials their advocates had sustained."

From this scene of glowing joy, the reader has to pass, by a rapid transition, to one of domestic distress. The health of Mrs. Knibb had been failing at the time of his last visit to England, and he would have taken her with him could the pecuniary means have been found. Early in 1843 her indisposition became so serious that he was obliged to think of a voyage for her benefit, and he announced such an intention to Mr. Angus on the 1st of March. Within a few days of this communication, and before the design was carried into effect, another of his children, and again his only boy, was removed by death. He thus imparted the intelligence to his daughters in England:—

TO HIS DAUGHTERS.

"*Kettering, March* 23, 1843.

"I write a few lines to inform you that it has pleased our heavenly Father to remove suddenly from us our dear Coultart to heaven. Fondly was he anticipating your return to Jamaica, and heartily would he have welcomed you to your native shores; but our Father has otherwise determined. He has taken him to himself, and our duty, painful as it is, is to submit without a murmur to this affecting instance of mortality. Last Saturday, full of health and spirits, he left this place with us to go to Falmouth, and till twelve o'clock on that day was hearty and strong. He then complained of being sick, but we did not apprehend anything serious. On sabbath morning he was no better, and we sent for the doctor. In the evening the fever flew to his head, and at seven on Monday morning (the 20th) he died in his mother's arms. Thus, my dear girls, have your parents lost their only son, and you your only brother. My feelings will not allow me now to enlarge upon this theme. I bow with submission, and so does your dear mother, to this deeply afflictive dispensation, and we pray that it may be a lasting benefit to our souls.

"The dear little fellow lies in the same grave with his brothers William and Thomas, there to rest till the morning of the resurrection. Let my dear girls hear this voice as a loud call to prepare to meet their God. Your brothers, four in number, are all gone; one of your sisters also has safely landed in heaven. Fanny has been very ill. You are spared; and why? O, my dearest girls, I hope to love, serve, and live to God. Is my dear Ann yet undecided? God grant that this death may complete the good work which I hope has commenced!"

On the 28th of the same month he wrote in the following strain of sadness to Mr. Angus:—

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Falmouth, March* 28, 1843.

"In my last I mentioned the probability of Mrs. Knibb's visiting England for her health, and for that of our dear boy, as well as for the purpose of bringing home our daughters. Little did I then imagine that in a few days he would be taken from us, but thus it has proved; an attack of scarlet fever in about thirty hours completed its destructive course, and he died. My little remaining girl also has been very ill with the same fever; and, although recovering, I fear she has received a shock which nothing but a voyage will remove. I have therefore taken a passage for Mrs. Knibb and the child, on board the Hopewell; and, should nothing unforeseen arise, they will sail about the middle of May.

"I would write more, but I have no heart for anything. The loss of my only son presses me heavily to the dust, for he was a lovely boy; but the full hope of his eternal happiness is a sweet relief."

His feelings were yet further expressed to his friend Dr. Hoby, as follows:—

TO DR. HOBY.

"*Kettering, April* 7, 1843.

"Your letter reached us in the depth of our affliction. Our only boy, our fourth, is gone. He was a second William, and in him my very heart was bound. I do not think that ever a father lost a more sweet and lovely child. His almost seraphic tones in singing frequently enchanted us. Though not six years of age he was just commencing to play on the eolophon. I gazed upon my only son, saying, 'This same one shall comfort us' after our affliction. Alas! in a few brief hours, from perfect health he was a corpse. My dear wife in silent submission bows beneath the stroke, and I hope we can both say, 'It is the Lord, let him do what seemeth him good.' I am cut to the heart. All, all, appears a blank; but still I hope I do not repine at these dispensations of Heaven. I had taken a passage for my dear boy and his mother to England, and arranged the whole, the day he was taken ill. Mrs. Knibb will still come to England. A residence here of eighteen years has reduced her strength. She could not leave when I did without injury to the stations, nor can I leave with her; so I must be content to partake of the solitariness of a bachelor-life, in the hope that the health of my dear wife may be full restored."

Mrs. Knibb sailed in the Hopewell, with her sick child, at the end of May. "Lonely enough," says her husband, "shall I be without them; but it is, I believe, the path of duty, and there I must let the matter rest."

On the 15th of June he wrote to Mr. Angus as follows:—"Mrs. Knibb is now on the way to the land of her birth, and I feel confident that she will receive from the friends in England who love the cause of Jesus, all the sympathy which her bereavements need. The loss of our dear, dear, last boy has wrung my soul; I cannot write about it. It is right. I bow, with weeping I bow, to Him who cannot err; but solitary and alone I pace the house, and think of him—and of *them*, for I have five now in heaven."

Under these afflictive circumstances it was undoubtedly a mercy for him that he was surrounded with objects demanding close attention and strenuous exertion. Labour for God was the purest and most effectual balm for his wounded spirit.

In April of this year some severe shocks of an earthquake were felt in Jamaica. Knibb thus notices them in a letter to Dr. Hoby:—"Awful is the desolation produced. I fully expected that our houses and chapels would have been a heap of ruins, but God mercifully interposed, and we were spared. The weather is now unusually and oppressively hot, dry, and sultry, and it would not create any surprise if a similar visitation befell us to that which has befallen Guadeloupe and Antigua. Well, we are in the hands of a wise God, and if death thus comes, it will translate us to the same home as if it came in the course of sickness and disease."

About this period Mr. Freeman, one of the secretaries of the London Missionary Society, and for the promotion of its objects, visited Jamaica. At Falmouth he was received by Knibb, in common with his brethren, with perfect cordiality and frankness. "He preached in my chapel," says he to Mr. Angus, "and, as a gentleman and a Christian, he conducted himself towards all of us into whose society he was shown so as to gain our esteem." He expresses his hope that this friendly visit would, as probably it did, accelerate the termination of the "unhallowed controversy" which had too long been raging there. Mr. Freeman did not at the time give to the public in any form the impressions produced on him by this visit; but in a speech which he delivered at the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society in 1846, he referred to his interview with Knibb as "one of the most pleasing recollections of his life." On that occasion also he spoke of the baptist churches in Jamaica in the following cordial and gratifying terms:—"O! it was a privilege to myself to mingle with the vast throng of congregations in Jamaica, and to see men who a little before were denied the freedom of action, and almost of thought, performing all their duties as men and as Christians, living in the fear of God, and being made meet to be partakers of the inheritance of the saints in light."

I cannot present a livelier picture of Knibb's position and proceedings during the autumn of 1843, than by giving a few extracts from the letters to his wife written at this period.

TO HIS WIFE.

"*Falmouth, June* 5, 1843.

"Since the period is so short from your departure, you will not anticipate much news, or suppose many changes to have taken place.

The enlargement of the chapel at Waldensia has been completed, and a very interesting meeting was held in commemoration of the event. This week I am going, as you are aware, to Coultart-grove, taking Kettering and Brown's Town as preaching places in my way. The congregation at Falmouth was better yesterday than I have seen it for some time, and I hope that the steps taken to promote a revival will have the desired effect. To-day ——— has applied to be received into the theological institution, so that I must make arrangements for the supply of his place. The school is declining, so that I do not much mind the change, and I think it is due to ——— to give him all the help in my power, as the prospect for mere school-masters is not very encouraging.

"The premises at Calabar are progressing very rapidly, and I hope that by August matters will be in a fair way for a thoroughly good commencement. Six candidates, exclusive of ———, but including ———, have been accepted.

"This evening we have a special prayer meeting on behalf of the South Sea Mission, which appears in great jeopardy. Well; 'The Lord reigneth; let the earth rejoice, let the multitude of the islands be glad thereof.'

"I have my fears that this will prove a sickly year, and we as a mission cannot expect altogether to escape. Well, it is all in the hands of a faithful God, and he, you know, my dearest girl, will do all things well. We have the most abundant cause to trust him. For twenty years he has mercifully helped us, and we have the hope of a happy *for ever.*

"At present I bear my temporary widowhood with exemplary patience, though, by the bye, nobody else has discovered the fact."

TO THE SAME.

"*Kettering, July* 20, 1843.

"I preached last evening from 'The whole family in heaven.' It is a delightful subject, and I hope I feel it to be so. In that family *there are an innumerable company of children*, that was one of the divisions. Our five sweet cherubs are there; but O, the loneliness they have left! I miss dear Coultart more than ever, and Kettering has no charms except those of memory; but it will have when the endeared wife and daughters return, and we can blend our prayers and our praises at the mercy-seat. I fondly hope that this will be the case, and that sparing mercy will sustain us till the happy day arrives."

The practice of commemorating the era of freedom by public celebrations on the first of August, which was regularly kept up, was observed this year with special splendour. Knibb gives the following spirited sketch of the proceedings at Falmouth and its dependent churches.

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, August* 4, 1843.

"To-day I have returned from our August festivities, and they have never been so interesting since 1838. The only blank was your absence. You would have enjoyed the Falmouth scene. The chapel was crowded to excess; Mr. Thorburn was with us, and a real downright meeting it was. Several hundred horsemen, with palms in their hands, assembled at Martha's Brae, and a little before twelve o'clock I went in the shandy adorned with ribbons, with Betsy and Mr. Henderson. In we came, and turned off at the Cocked-hat, round by the wharf to Robert Scot's, through the parade by the store, and to the chapel. It was a noble sight. The children paraded the streets, and the hurrahs of the good folks were deafening. A tea-meeting in the evening closed the day. Early in the morning we posted off to Kettering with a silk banner, and from thence to Refuge, where the chapel was literally crammed. There we had a good meeting, and the children a good holiday; and after the close we returned to Kettering, a goodly company I assure you. On Thursday morning we went off to Waldensia, where the congregation was not quite so large, but the chapel was well filled, and a good meeting was held; to-day the children meet and have a treat, and there is to be a tea-meeting in the evening. The news of the liberation of several millions of slaves in the East Indies gave much interest to the proceedings of the day, and the rejoicing of the people was of the most ardent kind. I have some idea of giving a lecture on the condition of the free coloured inhabitants of America, and in all probability shall do so in the course of the month. I think it will do good, and may produce some interest among that class in this island."

Whether the intention expressed at the close of this extract was ever carried out I have no means of knowing. The suggestion was evidently the offspring of a fertile and active mind.

It will be in the recollection of the reader that Knibb had received a commission to visit, on behalf of the society, several of the West India islands. How ardently bent on executing this commission he was, yet in Providence restrained, will appear from the following passages of his letters to Mr. Angus:—

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Falmouth, June*, 1843.

"With regard to Haiti, South America, and Barbados, O that you could know how I long to go; but I cannot leave. Gladly would I sever every connection, and leave all the comforts I now possess, if I could but see my path clear in this matter. If I know myself I am ready to go anywhere, if my blessed Master will only accept of my services. Who can tell whether he has not removed my last darling son, to tell me that my flight to some other sphere, less congenial to my views but more for the promotion of his glory on earth, is in course of preparation? Well, so let it be. If thy presence go with me, carry me up hence."

TO THE SAME.

"*Falmouth, July* 10, 1843.

"If I could have obtained a supply for Falmouth I should have liked, during Mrs. Knibb's absence, to have visited Haiti, Trinidad, and the other islands, if practicable, to have laid the result before the committee, and from thence to have gone to America; but the crippled state of the mission here, by the loss of so many agents who have left in ill health and other causes, prevents this. I deeply regret that I have not been able to visit the islands, but duty bade me remain. Should I go to America I shall not remain away long; if I can strike a blow at the monster in that land I shall rejoice. I have long desired it, and if I am able to effect any good for the miserable victims of that hellish system, to God be all the glory.

"P. S.—I have a very interesting letter from Haiti. How I long that I might be able to visit that place! Could you not send some one to supply my pulpit for a few months while Mrs. K. is in England, and let me visit these islands?"

The pointed reference made in this extract to America will be explained by stating that he had received an invitation from Boston to attend the Baptist Anti-Slavery Convention, which was to be held in that city in May, 1844, and that his brethren of the Western Union had unanimously requested him to comply with it.

Reference has already been made to the contemplated formation of a Theological Institution in Jamaica, and to the grant of money by the committee towards the purchase and furniture of premises at Calabar for this purpose. Diversity of opinion among the missionaries as to the locality had caused delay; but the preliminaries were at length settled at a meeting held on the 13th of May. In their usual style of confidence, the brethren requested him to do all that was necessary to the building. "Although I have no objection to this," says he to Mr. Angus, "it is a heavy tax upon my time, and will involve no little trouble. I have commenced, and I hope to progress rapidly with it." The institution was opened in October. "It was a deeply interesting service," says he, "and I fondly hope that the young men who have commenced their studies there will prove a blessing to the churches of Christ. Doubtless there will be many difficulties, disappointments, and trials, but these, by the blessing of God, we hope to surmount."

Knibb had not long resumed his active engagements, when personal affliction interrupted them. In the latter end of August he was attacked with fever. I give the account of his illness as contained in the following extracts of letters to Mrs. Knibb. The glimpse thus afforded of his devotional feelings and experimental piety will afford sincere gratification :—

TO HIS WIFE.

"*Falmouth, September* 3, 1843.

"I had started for St. Ann's Bay, there to preach for brother Abbott, and intended to proceed on to Spanish Town and Kingston on matters of business; but the Lord ordered it otherwise. On Monday morning, or rather sabbath night, about twelve, I was taken with fever, which kept me at home. I was able, however, to return to Kettering on Wednesday, but there I had another attack. I came down here on Thursday morning, called in Dr. Anderson, and am now better, indeed convalescent; and as there are three days before the packet leaves, I shall no doubt be quite well by that time. Exposure to the sun in travelling to St. Ann's was, I think, the cause of the fever; it has, however, mercifully terminated, and the goodness of my Heavenly Father demands a song of praise.

'Then let us bless his holy name,
For this new mercy shown,
Devote afresh our lives to him
Who claims us for his own.'

"*Sabbath evening.*—I have managed to preach to-day, and to administer the Lord's supper. We had a crowded chapel, and I hope good was done. The young in the congregation give me much pleasure, and I bless the Lord for this rising hope for the prosperity of the mission. I believe, my dear girl, that I shall have to write *quite well* ere this leaves. I should not have said anything about the sickness, but your confidence would have been shaken had you heard of it."

TO THE SAME.

"*Sabbath morning, September* 10.

"Through exposure I suppose, I had a return of fever the day after I sent my last, and each succeeding day it has paid me a visit. I fear it will settle into an intermittent; and if so I find it, I shall take a short voyage, either round this island or a neighbouring one. I hope, however, that this will not be necessary.

"Generally I have felt a calm and humble reliance upon the great atonement, mingled with the deepest abhorrence of any claim of merit. I feel, and long to feel it more, that salvation is all of grace. Oh what a mixture of vanity and unworthiness does a review of life present! What an unspeakable mercy that the precious blood of Jesus Christ cleanseth from all sin, and that none are excluded from a full participation in the benefits it confers! I think I can say that I had rather endure sickness than commit sin, and that I do pant for more conformity to God. I know not what hope any one can entertain from anything he has done, or can do. Were it not for the atonement I should sink into despair; but it is a faithful saying, and it is worthy of all acceptation, that Jesus Christ came into the world to save sinners.

"I know the deep anxiety you will feel, combined with the fruitless wish that you had been here, and right glad should I have been had Providence so ordered it; but friends have been very kind and attentive, and I hope that, long ere the packet sails, I shall be about my accustomed duties. You will remember, my dear, that *I have told you all.* I have not been at all worse than I have said, and I do not at present see any reason to think that I shall be. I mention this that your mind may be quite easy on this matter. You have often committed me to the care of my Father, and he has heard and answered your prayers. You can do so, I have no doubt at the present time; and should we be spared again to make mention of his lovingkindness and his tender mercies, we will erect an Ebenezer to his name, and devoutly acknowledge 'he hath done all things well.' This pleasure I confidently anticipate our Heavenly Father will grant. We know he will if it will be to his glory, and according to the path he has marked out for us; and who would desire to take the cause out of his hands? 'Thou shalt guide us by thy counsel, and afterward receive *us* to glory.' Our souls can on this promise rest. The God who has hitherto provided will still provide, and make us the happy recipients of his mercy and his love."

On the 19th of October, he wrote a letter to his valued friend, Mr. Town, of Leeds, a short extract from which will give a most pleasing idea of the elevated spirituality of mind with which he was carrying on his ministerial work. "Two sabbaths past," says he, "I enjoyed one of the happiest days of my life. The ordinance of baptism was administered by me in the chapel at Falmouth, to seventy-five persons, twelve of whom were from the sabbath-school. The whole scene was one of the most delightful I have ever attended. In the afternoon about thirteen hundred sat down at the table of the Lord, when the newly baptized were received by the right hand of fellowship. If heaven can be enjoyed on earth I think I then had a taste. O, it was sweet! It was passing sweet!"

Among the important measures adopted by the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society for the furtherance of their enterprize in Western Africa, was the freighting of a vessel (the Chilmark) for Jamaica, in order to convey to Fernando Po a number of teachers from thence. The opinion which Knibb formed of this project deserves to be recorded. It is transiently given in a letter to his wife, dated July 20, 1843, and is in the following terms:—"I am very much afraid that the project of freighting a vessel from England to Jamaica will not answer. I do not think we have men ready to go, and I heartily wish it had been postponed a year. I think the step rather premature, and hope that it may in some way be delayed."

The reader will now perhaps call to mind a feature in Knibb's plan for the African mission which may not, in passing, have particularly struck him. It was his desire that the teachers to be sent from Jamaica to Africa should spend a period under instruction and probation in England, the plan adopted by the committee was to send them directly from Jamaica. The execution of it, however, was not delayed. The Chilmark sailed from Portsmouth on the 19th of July, 1843, with several missionary friends on board, but principally Mr. Clarke, under whose selection and superintendence she was to be freighted in Jamaica with teachers for Africa. Amidst the excitement of the proceedings to which the execution of this purpose gave rise, Knibb seems to have lost his doubts, and on its consummation his soul was all on fire. The Chilmark having touched at several ports of the island, ultimately sailed from Falmouth on the 1st of December, a large farewell meeting having been held in the baptist chapel there on the 28th of November. Knibb embarked in her, and by the captain's permission and aid, steered her out of the harbour. From Kettering, on the following day, he wrote as follows to Mr. Angus:—"The Chilmark carries a noble band of missionaries. If ever I wished to have my likeness taken, it was when I requested and obtained permission to steer her out of the harbour, which, under the direction of the captain, I accomplished. O, it was an interesting sight! There stood dear Clarke, his face beaming with calm and dignified joy; there his beloved wife; there his interesting band, and the playful children. Among the number was one whom my dear boy William, now in heaven, had taught to read; one who had received his education from myself, when in Kingston; one a lonely widower, whose wife, after having engaged to go, was suddenly called to her rest, and on her death-bed urged him to proceed to Africa; and one the superintendent of my own sabbath-school, who in parting said, 'Take care of my brother, and speak to him about Jesus.' O, it was a noble sight! I wish you would just transcribe the items, and show them to Montgomery, and ask the favour of a few of his inimitable lines on the subject. In twelve months we shall have enough to freight another vessel."

Both the wish and the anticipation at the close of this extract are highly characteristic of the writer. I am not able to state, however, that either the one or the other has been realized.

The year 1844 was ushered in by new emergencies and new expedients. The state of things in Jamaica under freedom tended to effect a new distribution of the population. Obliged to seek a residence for themselves on freehold land, the peasantry were of course obliged to dwell where land could be obtained; and as a consequence of this, they migrated in large numbers from the vicinity of those chapels which were not in the neighbourhood of saleable estates. Knibb felt the evil, and at once adopted the remedy. Since it was impossible to carry the chapels to the people, the people must be kept in the neighbourhood of the chapels. Thus he wrote to Mr. Angus on the 10th of January:—"During the past two years the congregation at Falmouth has been continually decreasing, by the members and attendants leaving the estates near the town, and purchasing land at a distance from it. We have lost from that and other causes one-third of the congregation. Numbers more were on the move, when a beautiful piece of land, having on it a well of water, two miles from Falmouth, and near to twelve sugar estates, was offered for sale. It comprises ninety acres. I have at once purchased it, for £1,700 19s. Could I have kept the congregation together by any other means, I would not have purchased this land, but I could not. Eight hundred have left in two years; in two more the chapel at Falmouth would have been half emptied; and I can assure you that this would have afflicted me very sore, and that it would also have been a great injury to the mission."

The land thus purchased immediately became the seat of a thriving township, which, to perpetuate the memory of one of the great men whom the strife of freedom has immortalized, Granville Sharpe, was called Granville. It was the spot at which the vast multitudes organized themselves into a procession, who assembled to welcome Knibb on his return to Jamaica in August, 1845.

In February of this year he gives to Mr. Gotch, of Kettering in England, the following graphic sketch of Kettering in Jamaica. Kettering is a name not now to be forgotten in either hemisphere.

TO J. C. GOTCH, ESQ.

"The village is now assuming a very interesting appearance, and in a few years will be a flourishing little town. It is laid out in four hundred building lots, which, with very few exceptions, are sold. Regular streets intersect each other, and neat cottages are rising on every hand. My own dwelling house stands in the centre, with a neat chapel and school-room adjoining, and already nearly two hundred of the members of my church have here fixed their abode. The grand road through the island, from Kingston to Montego Bay, runs close to the land, and a village named Duncan's, where there are a post-office and a market, is situated on the other side of the road. The village is about two miles from the sea, a part of it commanding an extensive view of the ocean, while the distant mountains of Cuba can sometimes be distinctly seen. Thus I dwell among my own people, though in a foreign land, blessing, I hope, that God who has hitherto provided me a table in the midst of mine enemies."

A letter to Mr. Gurney written two months afterwards, shows that the religious welfare of this rising town was not neglected by him.

TO W. B. GURNEY, ESQ.

"*Kettering, April* 29, 1844.

"You will be gratified to learn that a church was formed on the first sabbath in April, of the inhabitants of this little town. I assure you that to me it was a delightful day. I found the poor people slaves; they have now their own neat freeholds, and the old house for the present serves as a chapel. I am very anxious, ere I leave my stewardship, to provide a better chapel for them;

then my joy will be complete. Do you think that a few kind friends would assist in building a jubilee chapel at Kettering? I would give all the stone required, and £50 as my subscription. I could build it for £600 (at least anything more I would be bound to raise), and for another £100 I would attach a neat school-room thereto. The latter sum I hope I could obtain from the Society of Friends. We are now very poor by reason of the long-continued drought, which has nearly ruined Trelawney; but still I entertain hopes that our Heavenly Father will interpose, and crown us again with his blessing. If you think, my dear sir, that the object I have mentioned is worthy of notice, I shall be grateful for any assistance you or your friends may be disposed to give. If such assistance should be given with any reference to my past efforts on behalf of the mission, or for the abolition of slavery, it would be the most grateful acknowledgment I could receive."

To the request contained in this letter Mr. Gurney did not feel it his duty to accede. On this point Knibb afterwards says, "I much regret that you are unable to assist me in the erection of a chapel at Kettering; I feel confident, however, that you would if you could. It was in my heart to do it; but if I cannot, I must be satisfied to let it remain for some one else to perform." His successors, I trust, will not be unmindful of this legacy.

Early in this year I find a letter to Mr. Angus which implies the existence of some practical differences between Knibb and some of his brethren, but I shall not inquire into the nature of these differences. I shall merely insert an extract from the letter, illustrative of the spirit which he cultivated. It is as follows: —

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Kettering, Trelawney, January* 29, 1844.

"The Jamaica mission lies near my heart. Three times have I crossed the Atlantic on its behalf, and I think the committee will bear me witness that its welfare, and not my own, has been the object I have aimed at. In connection with those efforts I see slavery prostrate, and freedom triumphant. I yet live in the affections of my younger brethren, whom I have been the humble instrument of bringing into the missionary field. It is to me a matter of pleasure that all of them have voted their confidence in me. I do love them; I rejoice to see them happy and useful, and gladly would I spend myself for their welfare; but rather than be the means of preventing union, and if any other means can obtain it, I will retire from all financial business, and request those who selected me to choose some other brother in my stead. Could I consistently leave this island, I would offer my services for either Barbados or Africa; but in the present state of matters here, I have declined even going to America, on which my heart has been set.

"If the friends in England think we are disunited, they are mistaken—at least as to the Western Union. I saw its commencement, and preached its first sermon, and I have been present, when on the island, at every meeting since that time for fifteen years. It has ridden on the storm. By its united efforts it has filled the scene of its operations with chapels, churches, schoolrooms, and schools; and with all its faults, it commends itself to the committee, no less by the good it has effected, than by the brotherly affection by which it has been distinguished."

The reader has seen that Knibb occasionally received admonitory suggestions from the mission-house. Some notice, it appears, was at this period taken of the manner in which the *Baptist Herald* was edited, and in particular of an article in which the speeches of certain members of assembly were said to contain certain "ebullitions of folly." He defended himself in the following terms:—

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Falmouth, February* 19, 1844.

"I really am surprised, much surprised, at the regret so unanimously felt at the use of the words 'ebullitions of folly,' as given to the rant of the members of assembly. Have you really read what trash they uttered? 'These men (the baptists), were noted for their ignorance, their false doctrines, and for everything that was bad;' they were 'a blood-thirsty and troublesome set of men,' and plenty of similar trash; and all this without a single rebuke from any member, or from the speaker. Now, suppose that, some morning, the very respectable committee to which you act as most worthy secretary, had been called in the House of Commons what we have been called in a similar house here, in what milder terms would you or the committee have designated such falsehoods? I say that they were 'ebullitions of folly.' *Were they not so?* Is not every word, nay every letter, true? Are there any three words in the English language that could more properly, and less improperly, designate them? If so, send them out; and as I used the words which are deemed so very reprehensible, I will use them when occasion offers.

"How often have I indulged the fruitless wish that some of the committee would just take the trouble to come out, and see the position in which some of us are placed! But this advantage it appears we are never to enjoy. Could not, in a year or so, if no other plan could be adopted, one of your members change with one of us for twelve months? A visit from a good, kind, hearty Christian brother sent by you, would do immense good to our churches."

The following letter to Mr. Gurney is in reply to some remarks respecting his general denunciation of oppression:—

TO W. B. GURNEY, ESQ.

"*Kettering, Trelawney, Feb.* 20, 1844.

"While I have always received your letters and their strictures with that respect which is so justly due to you and to your opinions, it has more than once suggested itself to my mind that you are not fully sensible of the very different position we occupy from that of ministers at home. Here we are obliged to be everything —everything religiously, politically, civilly, and (if I may coin a word) *buildingly*. While our brethren at home have deacons who can manage the temporal affairs of the church, and collect the necessary moneys, we must be responsible for all, and manage all. While there are laymen to whom the poor can go for advice, and even for legal advice, here ours is the only appeal. Every disagreement, domestic or civil, comes before us; by our advice they go to law, or by our advice abstain. It is just the same in political matters; not a step will they take, nor an agreement will they sign, without asking us. Often have I had persons come to me for advice who have walked twenty miles to ask it. All their titles are brought to us to see if they are right, and the knowledge that this will be done prevents many attempts at gross oppression. Thus, after the morning is past, a missionary (perhaps more especially myself) is not sure of an hour. Now what are we to do in such a case? Good rich Christians will not come and live in our midst; many cannot, and others will not. If we do not do these things they will not be done at all; and if ever, pressed out of measure—longing to finish a sermon, or to write a letter—you say, 'Really you must go to the magistrate, I cannot attend to it,' then the cry is, 'Minister, who tell me but you what me for do?' So on we go, and prevent as much mischief as we can. With regard to the *Herald*, it is the only paper in the island that can say a word for the people. We have no *Patriot* or *Nonconformist*, no anything, but turgid, putrid streams of polluted slavery; and this it is that renders it in my opinion necessary to introduce subjects which, were the case otherwise, might and should be avoided.

"Perhaps you will say, 'You are not sent out to do these things; let them alone, and take the consequences.' That is very easily said, but not so easily done. The missionary who refuses the ear of sympathy to the plea of distress might just as well stop at home. True, he might live on the salary he derives from home, and send home his quarterly spiritual budget; but no eye would bless him, and no heart would gratefully acknowledge his services. My own decided opinion is, that our missionaries in the east have tampered with oppression, and through fear of losing caste, have refused to open their mouths for the dumb. I have never heard an East Indian missionary denounce oppression, while that it existed to an awful extent, and was patronized by the British government, no one can doubt who reads the reports from that land of pampered pride and crawling servility. Often have I longed that they had struck out a *free* path. But why do I thus write? Do not I love the *men*? O, that I do, my soul almost adores them. I admire what they were; yet I gaze on what they might have been, had they identified themselves with the temporal as well as the eternal interests of man.

"You need not be afraid of political action in Jamaica. In fact there is none. The words whig and tory are here unknown. There is not that love of country there ought to be, and Jamaica is sinking under an apathetic feeling which acquiesces in everything her rulers propound, however absurd, or however injurious. A few needy adventurers and unprincipled lawyers are our members, while, free from arrest, they defy law and laugh at honesty. The infamy of their private character is in perfect keeping with their political degeneracy; and it was our rulers and their admirers that Sir Lionel Smith had in view, when he said, with just severity, 'Jamaica is composed of white savages and black Christians.'

"O that some one would come, and see a nation—no, not a nation, an island—in its infancy; some one who, unoppressed as we are with debt, preaching, toiling, &c., could calmly watch the growth of the new-born, and direct its energies! But, alas! the wish is vain. We must be content to do our best, and we must look to the mercy of that God who, I hope, accepts our well-meant efforts, and pardons the manifold imperfections with which they are accompanied."

The attention of the reader will probably be arrested by the remarks contained in this extract on the conduct of missionaries to the east. I am not prepared to indorse them. I regard them, on the contrary, as founded on a very imperfect knowledge of the state of India, and of the position of missionaries there. I think them, however, too characteristic to be omitted and leave the justice and applicability of them to be determined by persons better qualified than myself to come to a decision.

He found in the proceedings of the legislature of Jamaica, however, something in his estimation far more than "ebullitions of folly." They made large grants of money to the established church. On this point he uses the following language:—

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Kettering, Trelawney, April* 2, 1844.

"The accursed establishment is about to rivet new chains upon us; and if we are not very active, they will succeed. The more I see of that gigantic system of fraud, the more am I appalled at the apathy of some Christians, when they view the wide-spreading pestilence. If we had voluntaries able to sit in the House of Assembly, we could return a majority in favour of religious liberty in almost every parish. O that we had the men! Then, despite all cautions and rebukes, we would place the established church upon its own resources, and Jamaica would be free from this monstrous abuse. It is a matter not yet decided in my mind, whether one or two ministers of each denomination who are voluntaries, should not for a year or so go into the House, and there speak for God and untrammelled truth."

It will probably he regarded by most persons as a felicitous circumstance, that the idea thus struggling for a practical existence in Knibb's mind was never realized in action.

The summer of this year presents Knibb to us in an aspect entirely new. We find him in direct co-operation with the planters. The question which brought about this singular combination related to the admission of foreign sugar into the British market. The planters thought this would be injurious to their interests, and the labourers thought it would be injurious to theirs. Hence the memorial in opposition to this measure was, for the first time in the history of Jamaica, a cordial movement of all classes. Knibb himself fully entered into it. A meeting being convened on the 18th of June, in the court-house, the place was found too small, and permission was asked to adjourn to the baptist chapel, which was granted. Here no less than four thousand persons gathered, and passed resolutions now of little moment. An incident occurred, however, at once giving Knibb intimation of the kind of company into which he had got, and putting to the test his real attachment to his friends. At the request of the planters he had consented to move a petition to the British parliament. The word *industry* having been read in it in relation to the peasantry, Mr. Coar, the junior representative of the parish, moved as an amendment that *laziness* should be substituted for it. Knibb's spirit was up in a moment. "Unless that expression is retracted," he exclaimed, "I will not say another word. I will not have the people assembled together from every part of the parish to be thus insulted." Time had been when the magnates of Trelawney would have paid little heed to such words; but they wanted Knibb's help now, and they were humble, if not honest. Samuel Magnus, Esq., addressing the chair, said, that "laziness was not a characteristic feature of the peasantry of the island, and that the expression ought to be withdrawn." Mr. Coar accordingly withdrew it, and Knibb proceeded with his address. I find nothing in this address to extract, and note only, that he did not conclude it without giving his new friends some hard hits, on the enormous expenditure which had been incurred for the church and the immigrants.

About this period the affairs of the mission generally became very difficult, through several causes which operated to produce a great scarcity of money. In the very large outlay required by the erection of so many chapels, considerable sums had been borrowed from the banks, then very willing, if not eager, to advance it. Commerce, however, took such a course, that these establishments found it necessary, not merely to restrict, but to recall their advances. Of a meeting held by them in the autumn of 1833, Knibb speaks in the following terms, in a letter to his wife:—"The bank meeting of the planters is such as to render the obtaining of money very hard work. The people are willing to work, but money is nowhere to be had; and unless there is speedily some change in the prospects of the colony all our stations will suffer, and to maintain them will be no easy matter."

A severe and long-continued drought added to the pecuniary pressure, not merely by its general effect on commerce, but still more by its impoverishing effect on the mass of the people. The tone of the following extract of a letter to Mr. Sturge is painfully urgent:—"We are grievously distressed by the severe droughts we have experienced, and the effect upon our mission and schools is most distressing. I have struggled hard to support four day and four sabbath-schools, at an expense of £400 per annum; but I shall be obliged to relinquish part of them, which will grieve me to the soul. I do not like to ask for help from home. Yet our schools are our only hope. Our sabbath-schools are in a greater state of efficiency than I ever knew them, and this is the case with the day-schools, as far as the teachers are concerned. Do you know any kind friends who would raise £50 for Kettering school next year? I have now an excellent man and his wife devoting their time to it; but all I can muster is £50, and if I cannot obtain more it must be given up."

After the same tenor he wrote to Mr. Angus, in terms which seem to indicate the combined action of resoluteness and despair:—"My four day-schools are in a very pleasing state, and the sabbath-schools equally so, but how to find support for all I can scarcely tell. Could I rest contented with merely being the pastor, I could manage very well; but I cannot, and I hope and believe that Providence will soon appear for my schools. My schoolmasters are doing much good, and if our schools decline, our future mission will deplorably feel the blow. No, it must not be; and, by the help of Heaven, it shall not be."

In addition to these things, the chapel debts pressed heavily, and with peculiar weight upon him, not because his own was not paid for, but because he had become security for money which had been borrowed upon others. Upon this matter he sent home the following painful statement.

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Kettering, Trelawney, June* 12, 1844.

"Some years ago, I very foolishly became surety for —— and for ——. I had not the least idea but that they would long ere this have paid the bank all they owed. In this I have been disappointed; and I am resolved, let the consequences be as they may, to get rid of these responsibilities. I entered on them purely that the brethren might not draw on your funds, which otherwise must have been done. I hope, therefore, that as the money has been spent on mission property, the society will assume the responsibility by a loan till the stations can repay, that thus all the transactions with the bank may be closed. I must inform the brethren that I shall withdraw my security in six months; this will give them time to write to you, and if you think well, to obtain the loan. To this step I am compelled, lest my character should be involved. The committee will see that I am not making an unreasonable request, when I inform them that I have lent to the mission all I possess. If I lose it I lose it; but as I have no means by which I could pay the bank debts, and the property for which it was taken belongs to the mission, I hope they will at once decide. If I am sued, I cannot help it. Let me once get out of this scrape, and if I am caught again in a bank trap, I will not ask for any pity or redemption."

That either private friends, or the committee of the society, were insensible to this distressing state of things, will not for a moment be supposed; it is, however, true, that the demands which were thus made, and which were apparently without limit, exhausted and exceeded all available resources of every kind. Refusal, to a great extent, became of necessity the order of the day; and it produced in Jamaica the effect of unkindness. No one can witness a noble heart, pouring out its anguish as in the extracts which follow, without sincere and painful sympathy.

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Kettering, July* 18, 1844.

"My heart mourns and is in bitterness at times for these things, and for the want of sympathy with the people manifested. Sometimes I think I will leave altogether, rather than be daily lacerated with these matters. But then again duty demands my stay, and conscience says, abide. I fly to the cross, and unburden my heart to Jesus. Thus you have my heart's feelings. Cannot something be done for our schools? If they are given up, we are lost as a mission. My sabbath-schools rejoice my soul; they are the life of the church; but if our day-schools go, they will follow. One thousand pounds, if the friends of education would give it for a year or two, and give £20 to each school where there is a competent teacher, to be judged of by a committee in the island, would be an immense blessing to this island. Oh, are there no Christians who will have the luxury of doing this?"

TO W. B. GURNEY, ESQ.

"*Kettering, July* 19, 1844.

"What will be done with the mission I know not. It is not its politics that will ruin it, for the people have none. It is the lavish waste of the public money, and the taxing of the necessaries of life to such an extent as to cause nearly a famine. Some of them are taxed nearly five hundred per cent. additional to the old tax. The island is fast going to ruin, not because the people will not work, but because of the lavish expenditure of the needy adventurers in the assembly, who care for nothing but their own sordid gains. And *we* cannot help it; for, with thousands of voters, we have not a man we can send in. What with the severe drought, the heavy taxation, and the want of labour, I do not know what will result. I never was so disheartened by oppression in my whole missionary life. Our poor people cannot give. I must close my schools,—and this will break my heart, for they are the life of the mission,—that is, unless some relief is afforded; and I cannot ask the committee, and will not, for a fraction.

"To save my brethren, I have lent and borrowed on my personal responsibility full £3000 sterling. I believe I have done wrong; but the only alternative was, either that I must do it, or that it must have been drawn for on the society. In the hope of a change I did it, and I trust a kind God will lead us through. If not I shall state all the circumstances, and must appeal to the committee, or sink in debt. For myself I owe not a fraction. I have built six or seven chapels, schools, and mission-houses, and have paid for them all; but my brethren were sinking into the grave, overcome by their difficulties. I have borrowed money for their help, and one way or other, I am bound hand and foot.

"If I could feel it my duty to leave Jamaica, I would. My soul is burned out with oppression. I am scathed by the brimstone of the measures by which Jamaica is ruined by her wicked rulers. But I dare not leave, or gladly would I retire from the strife which for twenty one years has consumed my frame."

The next letter I have is dated the 20th of January, 1845, leaving a space of six months without specific information; the tenor of the short extract which I shall give from this letter, however, will satisfy the reader that the interval was occupied with similar anxieties. "My spirits at times," says he, "are completely broken. The cold-heartedness of the committee on the one hand, and my heavy responsibilities for the mission on the other, rob me of my peace. Had I loved the mission less I might have been free enough, and not have subjected myself either to the misery of asking for money, or to the contempt of being refused. However, it is done, and I cannot undo it; so I mus remain, until I am set at liberty by those who appear much less to feel the fetters with which they have bound me than I feel them myself."

About this period he was requested by his brethren at large once more to visit England, in order to lay more fully before the committee the pecuniary difficulties under which they laboured, and to concert some plan for their relief. He again accepted the trust reposed in him, and sailed from Kingston in the Thames steamer, at the end of March.

CHAPTER XVIII.

HIS FOURTH VISIT TO ENGLAND.

Knibb commenced his voyage in a devout spirit. "My ardent prayer," he says to his wife, in a letter dated at sea on the 5th of April, "is that God would more deeply impress upon my heart the necessity of living entirely to his glory. O what mercies we have to be thankful for, what sins to deplore! Withdrawn for a time from active scenes, I feel all the weight of my duties, and hope to return to them under a deeper sense of their eternal import. Let us, dear Mary, press forward to reach the prize, that in the day of Jesus Christ we may mutually rejoice that we have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain. And O what an eternity of blessedness awaits us, if faithful unto death! He is faithful who has promised, and who will do for us exceeding abundantly above all we can ask or think."

A few days afterwards he wrote to his daughters Catherine and Ann, who had returned to Jamaica with their mother, a letter which very pleasingly exhibits both his parental and his conjugal feelings. The following is an extract:—

TO HIS DAUGHTERS CATHERINE AND ANN.

"*At Sea, April* 15, 1845.

"You have rejoiced my heart, and that of your dear mother, by commencing that path which, if persevered in, will lead to a seat at God's right hand; and most affectionately would I urge upon you now in your youth diligently to pursue your Christian race. Now is your golden time. Soon other duties will press upon you, and other scenes engage your attention. Let me then implore you not to waste these precious hours. In prayer and in reading, as far as other duties will allow, improve them, or bitter will be your reflections when, too late, you will feel your need of them. You have had many advantages, and your responsibilities are great. Soon, it may be very soon, your dear parents may be removed; to them, therefore, and especially to your mother, let your conduct be always such as will leave no sting when they are numbered with the dead. Your dear mother has had a hard, and sometimes painful path to tread. Added to all her maternal cares, and the bitter though salutary pangs endured in the loss of our dear children, she has borne much of the anxiety of the stations under your father's care, and I fear her health is declining. To you is given the high privilege of preventing her every want, and teaching her by the uniform kindness of your manner, how much you feel the obligations under which you are laid for her faithful and incessant care. Providence has so ordered it that you are not obliged, as I was, to leave home at an early age, to seek your daily bread. I assure you, my dear girls, that I attribute most of my success in my missionary career to your excellent mother, while we are mutually impressed with the truth that we owe all to sovereign mercy, and feel that we have been unprofitable servants. Especially I feel persuaded, that my dear girls will feel their filial duties pressing upon them with peculiar force during the absence of their father. The accumulated duties and increased anxieties pressing upon your mother at this period will afford you the luxury of showing how much you sympathize with her; and thus, should I be permitted to return to my dear family, the meeting will be doubly endeared to you, and to us all, by sweet reflection on duty performed."

He arrived in London towards the close of April, and met the committee on the 26th of that month. They received him with undiminished cordiality, and entered into the consideration of the case entrusted to him in a spirit perfectly congenial with his own. Since it appeared that the most trying part of the burden which the brethren in Jamaica had to bear consisted of the chapel debts, and that if these could be materially lightened, all other demands could be satisfactorily met, they proposed a grant of £6,000 towards this object; a proposition which Knibb accepted, as fulfilling in a complete and gratifying manner the object of his mission. A short extract from a letter to Mr. Clark, of Brown's Town, Jamaica, will show his feelings on the occasion:—"The good hand of the Lord being with me, I have after several friendly interviews with the committee, succeeded in obtaining a grant of £6,000, without let or hindrance, subject to such conditions as seem to me reasonable and proper. I am anxious that a determined effort should be made by all the churches in Jamaica during the month of August, to pay off some of the debts. I had many mistakes to correct, and much rubbish to remove; but throughout the whole of my interviews with the committee not an angry word has passed. I have been treated with uniform kindness, and the vote was passed without a dissenting voice, at an open committee of full a hundred persons. To my God, and to your God, and to the God of missions, be all the glory!"

It is needful to observe that what Knibb here calls "an open committee" was, according to the altered constitution of the society, the annual general meeting of the subscribers. The business was transacted there, in order to take in the fullest manner the sense of the subscribers on the proposition under consideration.

At the public meeting which was held at Exeter Hall on the 1st of May, George Foster, Esq., of Sabden, in the chair, Knibb was received with the customary enthusiasm. I give some extracts from the address which he delivered.

"Little did I expect," said he, "when three years ago I took a farewell of you, and received those kind sympathies which bind heart to heart and spirit to spirit, that I should so soon appear among you again, for the purpose of laying before you deeds of wrong, perpetrated under the forms of law upon the emancipated population of Jamaica. I did trust that my work of agitation was done, and that I should be permitted to enjoy in calm serenity the victory you had won, and pursue that which is much more congenial to my taste, the extension of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

"The events that have transpired in Jamaica since my last visit to you have been both of a pleasing and a painful kind. We have not been called to mourn over the defection of our churches, but over their decreased ability to maintain the cause of God. The respected committee with whom I have been in friendly association for the past week, have kindly relieved me of a burden which pressed me to the dust; and the only burden I now feel is this—lest their kindness should not be so fully appreciated as at once to relieve them from the debt that they thus incur, in order that the Celestial Empire may have through them the light of truth. I appear, then, before you for the fourth, and I trust the last time, delegated by my brethren to lay before you the state of our mission, and the trying circumstances in which it is placed; and though I do not expect that this theme shall be as thrilling in its details as when I pleaded for the emancipation of the slaves, yet I hope I shall carry your sympathies, from the fact that if we had been in slavery, I should have had no cause to be here.

"It is right for me to remind you, that when we adopted that principle which I hold to be scriptural, whatever present sacrifices it may involve—namely, for every missionary to leave the parent society as soon as he can—when, I say, in obedience to what I believe to be the truth, we voluntarily surrendered our salaries, our chapels were then £12,000 in debt. We fully hoped, and we had a right to hope, that this debt would be discharged in the process of time. That hope, however, has proved fallacious. I rejoice to say that this has not arisen from a want of disposition on the part of the emancipated to give, for they do contribute as much now, in a general sense, as they ever did, when their ability to give is taken into the account; and I am confident, from the reception I have here received, that you still are willing to relieve those who are willing to help themselves. When the angel of liberty first shed his benignant beams upon the islands of the west, dazzled with the splendour by which we were surrounded, we did not fully comprehend either the responsibility that would be involved, or the assistance that would be required."

The substance of Knibb's address on this occasion consisted of an exhibition of the oppressive and iniquitous measures which had been systematically pursued by the legislature of Jamaica towards the enfranchised peasantry; but I refrain from making extracts here, in order that I may introduce an extended report of his speech at Norwich, where still more justice was done to the subject than at Exeter Hall. He concluded in the following terms:—

"Omitting much which I had intended to say, I would urge upon you to assist the committee. My speech was to have been to induce you to assist me; but they have, with a kindness that will never be effaced from my heart, taken the burden from me. The moment I retire from this meeting, I shall write a letter to Jamaica which will infuse fresh joy into the hearts of my brethren there; and during my brief sojourn in this country I shall try, with a heart devoted to it, to help the committee as much as they have helped me. Happy shall I be if the noble spirits by whom I shall be surrounded in different parts of the country, will respond to the appeal as they did when the liberty of the slave was the subject. Happy shall I be if, when I shake hands with the secretary, he shall say, 'You have got the money, and we are free from debt.'"

His arrangements being made for returning by the steamer on the first of July, the month of June was devoted to public services in England. On the 7th of this month he attended a meeting at Norwich, where his appeals were peculiarly effective. As in the opinion of many friends his speech on this occasion was a favourable specimen of his public addresses—I believe Knibb himself thought it the best speech he ever delivered—and as it presents a complete view of the topics he introduced in all his addresses during this visit, I give the principal part of it, as reported in the *Norfolk News*:—

"Respected friends, the subject which we have to introduce, and to lay fully, clearly, and impartially before you, has not merely to do with the agents you have sent forth to Jamaica. The question is not only whether the churches of Jesus Christ, now oppressed by fiscal laws, shall be relieved from their difficulties; it is not merely whether my brethren who are now struggling with obstacles of the most appalling kind, shall sink under them, or by you shall be sustained to bear them. However great and however momentous this question may be, it is but the small dust in the balance in comparison with the mighty principle of freedom and mercy we are working out in Jamaica, and which we are determined to work out, let the result be what it may; so that we may eventually present not merely to the Christian, but to the merchant, the temple of liberty, fair and true in all its just proportions, and prove (what can be proved) that 'righteousness exalteth a nation, and sin is a reproach to any people.' We wish to establish the fact, that while liberty is right, liberty is cheap. We wish to demonstrate the truth, that while slavery is, like all other sin, detestable in the sight of man and offensive in the sight of God, it is much more expensive than liberty. It is that this may be fully brought out, and that freedom may not be blamed for the mischief which tyranny has engrafted on it, that I have left for a time the island identified, not merely with all the endearments of home, but with a beloved congregation.

"Mr. Chairman, in the discussion of this subject some may be apt to suppose that we are entering into politics. If so, I for one say, I cannot help it. I am one of those individuals who believe that it is my duty by every means in my power to protect the injured man, let him be found wherever he may, or whatever be the circumstances in which he is placed. And we are not to be frightened from the performance of our duty by the supposition that we may now and then be political. The fact is this, that politics have entwined themselves round our dearest rights. We cannot touch anything that is inhuman, we cannot redress any wrong, we cannot sustain anything that is right, if we are to be terrified by this bugbear which men of the world have set up. But, respected friends, we are made of sterner stuff. We have been long accustomed, in the different scenes through which Providence has caused us to pass, to denounce wrong as wrong—to denounce sin as sin—and to denounce unrighteousness as unrighteousness, whether it be clothed in lawn and covered with a mitre, or whether it be found in the law books of our country; but in all our opposition, we wish it to be understood, that we use no weapons but those of calm reason and of deliberate thought, and the putting out (as men have a right to do) the free expression of our opinions. We wish not to obtain the alteration of anything by physical force; we wish only to establish in all their omnipotence the eternal principles of justice, assured that they will do the work.

"It will be necessary for me at some length to detail the circumstances in which we found the emancipated population, when your energies, in connection with our own, set them free. Never do we wish to forget (the remembrance lights up fresh joy in our hearts) the glorious event which broke the fetters of three hundred thousand human beings, and placed them in the possession of their long lost rights. Ever do we wish to remember, when we speak of their present position, the manly, the consistent, the orderly, the religious manner in which, bending on their knees before the eternal throne, they took possession of that freedom they knew religion had given them. The records of the colony of Jamaica, signed by the bishop himself and transmitted to the colonial office, confirm the statement that during the whole of that day to which I have referred—a day which these eyes saw, and at the remembrance of which this heart again leaps for joy—there was not found through the length and breadth of Jamaica a single drunkard to disgrace the island; and the records of our law books and of our police courts establish the fact, that during the first week of freedom there was not a single emancipated man, woman, or child, brought before the tribunals of their country for the commission of a crime. Now I ask you, my friends, ought such men to be again oppressed? Ought they to be by fiscal and other regulations brought again into a state of serfdom and of poverty? And if these things are attempted, is it not the duty of the Christian minister to endeavour by every means in his power to resist and to frustate them? I believe it is. And if the whole Christian church thought otherwise it would not shake my confidence in the rectitude of my belief, because I am not accountable to the Christian church for what I think, or for what I do; I am accountable only to that Divine Being who has impressed on this spirit an ardent detestation of tyranny and love of liberty, a disposition which I can no more repress than I can the current that flows in my veins. Wherever I behold the operation of tyranny, I feel impelled by this principle to trample it in the dust if I possibly can, and to allow the man who is oppressed to spring from his chains, and to assert his rights.

"Sir, immediately on possession of that freedom to which I have referred, there were laws passed which were intended to act in all their force (and the declaration that they were thus intended to act was publicly made) upon the then free inhabitants of Jamaica. These laws were—first, the ejectment act; secondly, the trespass act. By the first the whole population, or any portion of it, could be ejected at a week's notice from the homes in which they had been born, and in which they had vegetated while slaves; by the other, the police of the country was empowered to catch hold of and to imprison any individual who was found in his former home, after he had received notice of ejectment. This was done with the avowed purpose of compelling the labourer to work for whatever wages they chose to give, and to perform as much work as they required. But this was not all. Every one who has dwelt, as I have, amidst the dark, and dank, and loathsome miasma of slavery, every one who has seen, as I have, the wretched cottages in which the peasantry were obliged to live, knows perfectly well that it was impossible to instil the finer virtues of Christianity, which glow amidst the amiabilities of social life, unless a comfortable home could be provided. Eight or ten persons were often huddled together in one room; and though they might expect the protecting hand of God when they could not help it, they had no right to expect the same benignant care if they could help it and would not. Yet to suppose that they would improve huts from which they could be ejected at a week's notice was perfectly impossible. We could not, we would not, recommend them to do so; but we recommended them, by industry, by frugality, by an attendance to their daily work, during the first two years of freedom in which we enjoyed much prosperity, to secure, if they possibly could, a home for themselves. By the census taken during last year, I find that there were full nineteen thousand persons, formerly slaves, who had purchased land on which they were erecting their own cottages. In St. James's parish, there were 10 new free villages, with 11,020 houses; in Hanover, there were 18 free villages, and 800 houses; in Trelawney, the parish in which I live, there were 23 free villages, and 1590 houses; in St. Ann's parish, there were 40 free villages, and 1743 houses; in St. Mary's, 15 free villages, with 632 houses; in St. Thomas in the Vale, 10 free villages, with 1780 houses. One of my brethren, an esteemed brother unknown to you, in a record which he has given me of the state of the parish in which he dwells, has the following remarks :—' In Mount Hermon church, a church formerly under the care of Mr. Merrick (who has gone to Africa), and situated in St. Thomas in the Vale, only 24 persons out of 543 now reside on the former estates, having purchased freeholds near estates where work was to be obtained; while only one person was convicted of crime in Hansia village in 1844, out of a population of 565 persons, and that was for an assault.' Now it may perhaps amuse some of you just for one moment, (for we can afford to introduce amusement into our social, our intellectual, and our religious festivals), to hear the names which they give these villages. A very large village in St. Thomas in the Vale is called, ' Try and See,' the meaning of which is, ' Let us try and see what can be done.' The next is called, ' Happy News,' referring to you know what. Another is named, ' Stand Fast ;' a fourth is named, ' Harmony.' A very large village through which I rode the other day, and through which I shall soon ride again in all probability, has a very long name; it is this, ' Long looked for come at last.' There is another which they call, ' August Town;' another which they call ' Time and Patience,' because they say time and patience work wonders. There is another called, ' 'Tis Well ;' and last though not least, in consequence of there being, as some of them said, ' a woman on the throne when we were set free,' there are five or six ' Victoria Towns.'

" In this position were we placed, when it pleased our Heavenly Father to afflict us with one of the most severe and long-continued droughts that I have ever known in Jamaica, during the twenty-one years of my residence there. This however might have been borne without that diminution of happiness to which I have referred, and without that privation and suffering to which I shall have to allude, if the House of Assembly had not selected that period, when they knew the peasant could not obtain work, to introduce a mode of taxation which, I believe, wicked as governments have often been, is unparalleled in the history of the civilized world. If I cannot prove this, upon me let the blame rest. As soon as the free peasants had, by honest industry, secured the possession of land as I have said, they commenced the erection of cottages in which they and their wives and children might live, and in which many a time have I with my wife and children sat, delighted to behold the cleanliness and the healthy appearance of all around us; but as soon as they began to build these cottages, (the houses in which they lived for a time, composed of thatch, being pulled down,) the utmost distress was caused by the introduction of a new tariff. This was laid in the first place on the lumber, that is the wood, of which their houses were to be constructed, and which comes for the most part from a foreign shore. An evidence of the *animus* with which this was done is furnished by the fact, that at the very time when an additional tax was laid upon the wood which the peasant had to purchase that he might erect his own cottage, most of the tax upon the wood which was needed for constructing hogsheads, and making puncheons, was taken off. At the time the slave-owner had to build slave-cottages, the tax on shingles was one shilling per thousand; it is, however, eight shillings per thousand when the peasant has to purchase them. To show you the extent to which this tax goes—during the last year 7,536,000 shingles were brought into the market. At the time they laid this additional tax of seven shillings upon shingles, they took off the tax on red and white oak staves; that tax was formerly twelve shillings, they kindly for themselves made it two shillings. Now there is just as much in a white oak stave as in two shingles; it is the same wood, or nearly so, it comes in the same ship, and is brought from the same shore; and why I ask should the poor man pay sixteen shillings for the same quantity of wood that the rich man pays two shillings for?

"This, however, bad as it was, was only a temporary evil. Houses would not want building always. When once erected they will last for years; and we should not so much have complained of this had it not been to show the *animus* in which the whole was concocted, and the power which was brought to bear, wherever it could be brought to bear, upon the rising spirit of the emancipated slave. We are almost entirely dependent upon America, and other parts of the world, for the food we eat, as well as for the clothes we wear; and so long as the land in Jamaica shall be held by merchants in London, or merchants elsewhere—so long as they shall have the control of what shall be planted, and what shall be reaped—so long as that fertile soil shall be engrossed by the cultivation of sugar which we cannot live upon, and rum which we do not want to touch at all, we must look somewhere else for food to eat. Every loaf of bread, and every pound of salt fish or of salt pork, that the peasant purchases, he must obtain from another source than from Jamaica. To show you the extent to which this has gone only in one year—during last year there were brought into Jamaica 139,616 barrels of flour. The House of Assembly have placed upon this a tax of four shillings per barrel, and the British government have placed another tax of two shillings per barrel. Of corn meal—a meal made out of corn grown in America, and very much consumed by the lower class of society, 32,337 barrels were brought in during last year. When the planter had to feed the slave the tax on this was threepence per barrel; as soon as the free man had to feed himself they raised it to three shillings. Rice is another article very much consumed by the poor in Jamaica; fourteen thousand and some odd cwts. were brought in last year. When the planter had to feed the slave, though little was the food he gave him, the tax was one shilling per cwt.; this tax is now raised to four shillings per cwt. Salt fish is universally consumed, and 150,000 cwt. were brought into Jamaica during the past year, very nearly half a cwt. for every inhabitant of the soil. During the time of slavery there was no tax on this, or if there was, it must have been a very small one, for I cannot find it at all; now it is taxed two shillings per cwt. An article which the better classes of our peasantry, those who have risen a little above their fellows, consume to a very great extent, is salt pork, which is brought chiefly from America. During the past year, there were brought into Jamaica 29,803 barrels of pork. During the existence of slavery the tax upon this pork was four shillings per barrel. They have now placed upon it, if it comes from America,—and the extent to which it comes from America may be learned from the fact, that out of the 29,000 barrels imported, 24,000 came from that country—a tax of fifteen shillings per barrel, and the British government have laid on a tax of five shillings; so that on every barrel of pork that comes from America, costing at its wholesale price twenty-six shillings per barrel, there is laid a tax of twenty shillings. I refer to these things for the purpose of showing you, that if all the results of freedom have not been as you anticipated, and that if we have not been enabled to work out our own voluntary separation from the society, it has not been because there has been an unwillingness on the part of the peasant, either to maintain himself by honest industry, or to support the cause of Christ; but that the result has been marred, and the growth of freedom has been checked, by an iniquity which can only be appreciated by reading the tariff thus imposed upon them.

"It is necessary for me to state too, that these taxes were laid for the purpose of enticing other labourers into the country, to compete with the peasant who was there at work. It is when we view the one in connection with the other that we behold this mixture of folly and iniquity in its just proportions. The money raised by these taxes in three years amounted to £510,589, and some odd shillings. A great portion of this money has been expended for immigration purposes; that is, for bringing into the country labourers from almost every part of the world, there to sicken and to die. I say this advisedly, for I have seen it. I have stood by the side of the expiring poor man who has been decoyed from the land of his fathers, and has been left by these merciless tyrants to poverty, disease, and death; and I warn with a voice, strong, clear, and loud, any poor man from being decoyed into the clutches of the slave-owner, in the expectation of finding a lamb. There has been for this system of wrong, £105,514 raised by taxes on the peasant's food. They have expended in houses in which these labourers are to live, £22,737; and I dare the whole plantocracy, from the governor down to the meanest underling that works on an estate—I challenge them here, as I have challenged them there, to prove that the immigrants were at all required.

"'I wonder how they can be so foolish,' say you. When you know as much about the foolishness of these men as I do you will not wonder. Amidst all this, there are a great many nice slices for themselves. Mr. Commissioner This gets his thousand pounds, and Mr. Comptroller That gets his five hundred pounds, the agent who carries on the work gets his money; and in one way or another they take good care that they are no losers by the bargain.

"The next subject to which this increased taxation has been applied, has been the introduction of an armed police. I am confident that there is no more need of an armed police in Jamaica, than there is in heaven. I do not mean to say that we do not need men to keep the unruly in order; but that we should have an expensive military parading through the length and breadth of peaceful Jamaica, where such is public security that over the mountain tops, and in all our fastnesses, the mail has travelled with only a negro boy, carrying thousands of pounds, and has never been robbed but once, and then by a white man—that we should have an armed police prowling through the length and breadth of the land, with their muskets ever loaded, fomenting nine-tenths of the quarrels they quell, and that this should be paid for by taxes on the peasant's food, is one of those abominations with which colonial rule has ever been identified.

"There is another evil to which I must refer. With this armed police on the one hand, and the influx of immigrants on the other, it was thought necessary that there should be an increased largeness given to the established church—a church from which nine-tenths of the population conscientiously dissent. I know perfectly well that there are many individuals who will say, that with whatever force we touch civil things, we have no right to touch the venerable establishment. I happen most decidedly to differ from them. So long as the food of my congregation is taxed to support it I have a right to speak, and I intend to exercise that right; for if there was any individual from whom ecclesiastical fangs ought to have been kept off, it was the emancipated slave. If in connection with this enlarged system of operation, said to be religious, poisonous and soul-destroying errors are spread among the people, our uprightness and our duty to Christ compel us to speak. And that this is the case no fear of man will ever keep me from saying. We have, sir, through the length and breadth of Jamaica, that slimy semi-popery, so hard to catch and so subtle in its operations—Puseyism. Our missionaries, not merely in the east but in the west, are now denounced by these striplings from Oxford and Cambridge as men who ought not to touch the sacred ark of God. Tracts are sent among our labourers, headed thus—'The sin of attending dissenting places of worship.' They have placed their little basin where the cross of Christ should stand; they have placed the sacrament of the Lord's supper where the atonement should shine forth in all its power. I ask you, Christian friends, if your minister was to do this in this chapel, would you not speak out? If Mr. Brock was to leave the high-toned subject of Christ's atonement, and speak about things of which prophets never spoke and apostles never wrote, would not the emptiness of the pews teach him that men could think, and that men would act? And are we to be frightened from a sense of our duty to Christ, and from a sense of duty to the religion we profess, because the church happens to be established by the laws of the land, and our beloved queen sits at its head? No. No being on earth ought to possess that power which she possesses as head of the church. I yield to no man on earth in ardent reverence for her character, and I would yield to none in the peaceful assertion of her legitimate rights; but when she, or any other power, trenches where Christ should stand, we say, No. In order to show you the extent to which this is felt, I will just refer to the parish in which I live. There are five places of worship belonging to the endowed church—it is not established by law in Jamaica, and I hope it never will be; it is established by courtesy, and nothing else—those churches will not hold above 3,000 persons. Now we have in the same parish nine baptist chapels, and these chapels will hold 9,900 persons; our Wesleyan friends have five chapels, which will hold 4,300 persons; the presbyterian church has two chapels, holding 1,200 persons, and our independent brethren have one chapel, holding 300 persons. Now I ask, is it not manifest injustice—does not our spirit writhe with loathing at it, that this people, who formerly were slaves but who now are free, should be compelled to find accommodation for their masters, should be obliged to support five priests from whom they conscientiously dissent, and who employ all their power to impress upon their minds that their ministers are worthless? Let this be tried in anything but religion—let it be tried in the erection of mechanics' institutions—let it be tried in the erection of philosophical halls—let the poor provide themselves with what they want, and then let a tax be laid to compel them to find the same accommodation for the rich; how human nature would spurn the idea! And is it less wrong, Christian friends, because it happens to be mantled in a bishop's cloak? It is wrong, and derogatory to the religion of Jesus Christ; and I wish the people of this land to decide that the church of Jesus Christ shall have nothing to do with this system of spoliation abroad. As an appendage to Christianity it tarnishes its lustre, it impairs its beauty, it has long robbed it of its vitality, and the happiest day for England, and the happiest day for the world, will be when this ecclesiastical incubus falls to the dust. I do not mean, Christian friends, in these remarks to convey any censure upon that system of faith which our episcopalian friends hold. I myself believe conscientiously, that they would prosper far better if they were free. I am for free trade, not merely in sugar, but in religion too. I would never cast such a slur upon the episcopalians who tell us that they have at their head the successors of the apostles, that they number all the talent, that they possess all the energy, and have engrossed all the wealth of the church, as to suppose that they loved their religion so little that they did not like to pay for it. Others may say so if they please, and may assert that unless Christianity is supported by the state it will fall. I believe no such thing. I believe a great many things would fall, but not a particle of truth itself. These are the sentiments I hold, and like an honest man I express them. These sentiments I have proclaimed in Jamaica, and deeply impressed with the truth of them I return to that island. I do not say that feeling will not sometimes rise that these striplings should step in when we have been twenty years toiling for the poor slaves, and were binding up their broken hearts when they were scarcely born, or if they were born, were playing at marbles at Oxford or Cambridge. Feeling does rise, I admit, that they should come in this sneaking, snake-like, insidious manner, and endeavour to infuse into the minds of our peasantry that the ministers who have set them free, and have proclaimed the gospel of God's dear Son, possess not that lineal descent which has come down through all the abominations of Rome, and which I would not have if I could get it. But do not suppose, Christian friends, that our people are caught; not at all, our congregations still stand, fair, clear, and numerous. Some persons may say that we have thus spoken respecting the doctrines of the established church without any proof. I aver it to be a truth, and if it goes to one in this town who has the power to disprove it, he may. I assert, that when the last bishop of Jamaica died, a convocation of the clergy was held to discuss the propriety of praying for his departed soul. In addition to this I have a copy of a sermon preached before my lord bishop (by courtesy, not by right) of Antigua, and in that sermon, published by request, there is the following sentiment:—'The sectarian cry, 'the bible, the bible alone, is the religion of protestants,' is false.' There is also this sentiment—'While it is right to attend on the means of grace, while it is right to pray to God, while it is right to read the scriptures, the sacraments are paramount to all; for baptism gives life, and the Lord's supper sustains it.' Now I say, sir, that the worst errors of popery are contained in these sentiments, and that your missionaries would be recreant to the trust committed to them if they did not denounce them. If the cross of Christ is thus to be hid—if the only hope of man's salvation is thus to be removed, and these mummeries placed in its stead, then I say we must call upon our brethren to surround the throne of mercy and pray that God would avert this curse, and then with one united effort, by the force of truth to banish it from the earth.

"Amidst these scenes, you will not be surprised if the effort made some seven years ago to free ourselves from pecuniary connection with the society, has not completely answered our expectations. At the time we made this resolve, a resolve which I still believe to be right, and which I hope our missionaries in Jamaica will try to carry out, whatever personal sacrifice it may involve, namely, that every Christian church should voluntarily support the minister it loves—I say, at this time, we were £12,000 in debt, and from circumstances which I cannot now detail, that debt has increased to £18,000. Remember, however, that during the last few years, we have built thirty-five chapels, sixteen school-rooms, and twenty-four mission-houses. They are now standing in Jamaica, all of them new, for slavery pulled down our old ones. There are now in Jamaica forty-seven baptist chapels, and thirty mission-houses, for we think it right, not only to get a place in which the Christian shall worship God, but a place in which the minister shall live. These mission-houses we have erected in healthy spots. I mention this to tell you, that when I went to Jamaica the average of missionary life (I kept a table of it) was only three years; but now that we have healthy residences, remote from the miasma, the average of missionary life is more than seven years. You do not now hear of those appalling instances of death from Jamaica that you used to hear of. The reason is, our most trying work is done. We have comfortable chapels in which to preach, and we have generally comfortable houses in which to live. We have none of those luxuries to which reference has sometimes been made; but I think, if a man goes out to such a climate and toils hard, and takes the only companion of his life with him, he ought to be maintained in comfort while he remains there. The chapels, mission-houses, and school-houses have cost £157,000. We have with much difficulty, and much diligence on the part of the people, succeeded in paying off £139,000 of this money. We were compelled by our difficulties to ask our people to contribute if they could, when at the same time it was insinuated on every hand, 'Go to church, and you can have religion for nothing.' We did not like to urge the people to give when we knew they would if they could, but that they really could not. Merchants were pressing on every hand. The newspapers announced the fact that, for the first time, baptist missionaries could not meet their engagements. The banks, by whom money had been lent at the exorbitant interest of ten or twelve per cent., demanded immediate payment. We were failing—at least my brethren were, for I owe not a fraction on earth. The chapel in which I preach is free, and we intend to help our brethren pay their debts. Feeling, Christian friends, that I was by right the property of my brethren, and that as my name was known in England, at their request it was my duty to forsake my wife, and children, and church too (I love one almost as much as the other), I thought that while they were in difficulties and I was free, I could not eat my morsel alone. I said, 'I will go; I will try and see what can be done. I will lay your case before the public; uphold me by your prayers. I will be back on the 1st of August.' This very week, as near as I can understand, they will open the letters containing an account of the noble grant of our society of £6,000, which will free them from their responsibility to a certain extent. I am confident that the Christians of Norwich will respond to my appeal, for men who have toiled for years are in difficulties. Their difficulties arise from the very extension of the gospel for which you pray. Had slavery not been abolished we should not have wanted chapels, for in the time of slavery the negro could only come once in a month, or once in two weeks; he had to go to work on one Sunday to get food to eat for the next, but now he can come every Lord's day. It was right and noble in my brethren, instead of keeping the large churches together, to divide those churches on every hand, and let the synagogues of the Most High be multiplied. We have done this as far as we possibly could; at least some have done it, all have not, I only wish they would. I will give in illustration of this a fact with which I am immediately connected at my own station. When I went in the year 1830 to take possession of that station, vacated by the death of my beloved brother missionary, Mr. Mann, who has long since mingled his hallelujahs with those of the saints made perfect, I found the station without a house, without a chapel, without a school, and without a school-room. The first house I lived in there had but one room in it, ten feet square, for six of us. I had not been there a year before down came all the wrath of slave-owners upon us. Chapels were destroyed, we were imprisoned and tried for our lives, but acquitted, as just and honourable men ought to be. Those whom then you knew not came home, and denounced the system which had dared to lift its hideous head against the beautiful structure of Christianity; and Christianity rose through your prayers, frowned upon the monster, and the Goliath fell beneath the stroke. Since that time there have been erected the following chapels. We have erected Falmouth chapel, and a beautiful chapel it is, it seats 2,500 persons; Refuge chapel I built next, which seats 1,500 persons; Rio Bueno is the next which I built, seating 1,000 persons; Waldensia is the next, which seats 1,200 persons. Unity chapel and Stewart Town have been built by other brethren, the one holding 600, the other 1,200 persons. I erected last year, or rather repaired and made comfortable, a chapel at Kettering, one of the free villages built on land I have purchased; it seats 400 persons. Thus there have been erected, in ten years, chapels for the accommodation of nearly 8,000 persons; and this has been done mostly by the humble individual who now addresses you, and he speaks not, I am sure he does not, with the least vainglory, for he knows his heart too well. At the time of which I speak there was no school-room at all in Trelawney in which the black child could be admitted; there now stand in connection with our own mission seven or eight. Then the only room which the missionary had was the one to which I referred; now there are five or six mission-houses, standing in healthy situations. Then I had 650 members; from that time down to the present, I have by baptism, assisted sometimes by other brethren, received into the church 3,000 persons. I have dismissed, to form other churches, 2,050. There have died in the faith 320, and as far as I can find out, after a careful examination of the church books, only 100 have been put away. I will just tell you how the members now stand. Falmouth is the mother church—that is mine; we have now in it 1,280 members; Refuge was our first child, we have 780 members there; Rio Bueno was the next, 315 members there; in Waldensia there are 746 members; Stewart Town, the next, has 814; Unity, the next, 340; and Kettering, the last, has 200 members.

"Amidst all the trials I have described, who can wonder if careworn countenances are now beheld where cheerful expression once dwelt? Who can wonder that the peasant who sees scarcely any hope of redemption, looks with deep interest for the result of my visit home? If the House of Commons do not know what the wrong is, it is not my fault; I have declared it to those men who ought to protect the injured, and if they do not, we must find some other means to do the mighty work. The work must be done, and by the help of Omnipotence, the work shall be done. We hope very soon to have a great deal more power in our own hands, and despite of all the charges of political action brought against us, we intend to use it. My belief, Mr. Chairman, is this, that every man is accountable to God for every wrong his country labours under, if he can, by working out the principles of truth, get rid of that wrong; and I do not intend to allow any more of this guilt to rest upon my shoulders than I cannot possibly help. I invite my co-workers in the cause of Christ (for the crisis in which they are placed demands it) to throw themselves into all the circumstances in which their fellow man is placed, to catch hold of the deep-toned sympathies of the poor, and to assist in lifting them into that state of society which God intended them to occupy. However long the might may strive with the right, still the right shall eventually triumph. There is a period coming when truth shall prevail, and though, in the language we very frequently sing in Jamaica,

'Now sorrow reigns, and earth complains,
For folly still her power maintains;

The day shall yet appear
When the right with the might
And the truth shall be;
And come what may
To stand in the way,
That day the world shall see.'

"Some of you, my friends, will think us very radical to sing that song. But if you will only come over to Jamaica on the 1st of August, you will sing it too. You will behold smiling countenances, you will see streamers flying, you will behold men with palm-leaves in their hands, and if you do not sing it will be because you cannot.

"I may, sir, mention a fact to show the civil benefits which religion imparts. We have felt it our duty as Christian ministers, however powerfully we may speak, and whatever strong language we may use, to inculcate the principles of peace. We denounce all war as unjust. We go to the full extent in this matter. I have been in circumstances of the utmost peril. I have had my life threatened time after time, and I never have employed, and never will employ, any weapon except my tongue, in order to defend myself. We too, sir, feel it our duty, and we have tried to carry out that duty, to get rid of those disgusting scenes of judicial strangling which disgrace our country; and I hope that the sympathies of all Christians will soon be aroused to the enormity, to the soul-deadening, the crime-increasing effect, of making, as Voltaire said, 'the worst use of any human being, that of hanging him." So far as our influence in this matter extended, that when two unfortunate individuals were condemned to die in the city of Kingston, a city numbering full 40,000 persons, in consequence of the efforts we put forth they could not obtain a single individual out of that mass to perform the office of judicial strangler, except a sailor whom they kept drunk for two days to do it. When another individual was to be hung, and when I believe by the laws of the country he had no right to suffer death (I believe most conscientiously, and have said so in Jamaica, that had he been a white man instead of a black man he had not died), we aroused all our energies, we threw in petition after petition, and episcopalian, baptist, Wesleyan, Roman catholic, all united together, to implore that that man might not die; but we could not succeed. We said to his excellency, the governor, in plain terms: 'If you hang that man you will commit judicial murder.' We then set to work to see if it was not possible to prevent his being hung, by infusing such a hatred to it in the public mind that no one would hang him; and they could only hang that poor man by pardoning a convicted felon seven years' transportation. I invite you to carry on the work here, and I hope some of my brethren will live to see the day when public executions will no longer disgrace the most civilized nation on earth. I know some may say that this is making an apology for crime. No such thing. Judicial strangling produces hardness of heart, and has nothing corrective in it. I am one of those who firmly believe that God has not given to men under the new covenant of his love, the power of taking away the life of any fellow being.

"Sir, there is another subject to which I will advert, and then I will close. I refer to the social influence which Christianity has produced. Sir, we have had schemes propounded by would-be philosophers of our time, who have told us that they have produced a system of faith far superior to Christianity for ameliorating the condition of the poor, and for spreading civilization around. We deny that they have. We tell the poor and the rich not to look at religion in the distorted view in which it is frequently presented, but to look at it in its godlike and glorious effects, in the transformation of the mind, and in the happiness which it imparts. I refer, sir, to the institution of marriage. Every one acquainted with the West Indies knows perfectly well, that the floodgates of licentiousness opened by a former governor, and sustained by all the power of his iniquitous patronage, spread a blasting and withering influence through the whole population. To such an extent did it go under his administration, that when I went to the parish of Westmorland, twelve years ago, I could not find a single married person through the length and breadth of the place. During the last three years we have recorded in Jamaica, in the public documents of the island, the following marriages:—the baptists have married 8710 couples; the Wesleyan methodists have married 5580 couples; the Moravians 2839; the presbyterians 2382; the London Missionary Society 554; the established church 8294; and the Roman catholics 3. You will perceive by this, that the denomination whose interests are sought to-night have married about 500 more than the established church. There have been then in Jamaica, in the time to which I refer, 28,000 marriages. I do maintain, sir, that we have a right to claim this as one of the fruits of missionary enterprise. Seeing as we do before us many who know the obligations and felicity connected with that state which has received the sanction of the Most High, they will rejoice with us, and they will rejoice with our wives, that the system of licentiousness has been checked, and that morality and virtue now stand where immorality and vice prevailed.

"One word more, for humanity is my theme, and Africa is my subject. You are aware, that while at this moment we stand in delightful communion with God the father of liberty, and with the sacred cause of liberty on earth, there are seven millions of human beings held in hopeless slavery. There are at this moment more than ten thousand crossing in the accursed slave-ships to the land of their bondage and their death. I have been afraid lest amidst the pleasures we possess when we gaze upon the emancipated slaves in the west, we should forget the appalling fact, that millions still groan, and that millions more must die, unless by the influence of the efforts which have been undertaken for deluging the coast of Africa with the humble followers of the Lamb, the monster slavery should fall. I would from the bottom of my soul that every war-ship was taken away from the coast of Africa, for I am perfectly confident that they only increase that misery which they are intended to prevent. So long as a man can be purchased for a few shillings and will fetch forty or fifty pounds, what power on earth can stop the smuggler, when there are two thousand miles of coast to smuggle on? No power can stop it, save that which can change his heart; and when that is done we may be sure he will not sell his fellow. Perhaps some will say we speak under the influence of a heated imagination. Your imagination would be heated too, if you had been in a burning clime as I have for twenty-one years—if you had sat upon the slave-deck as I have—if you had beheld the wretched and emaciated victims crawl from their infernal hole—if you had smelled the insufferable stench—if you had beheld the unhappy slave dying, without being able to tell him of Jesus Christ—if you had taken, as I have, a beloved boy who is now in heaven, and bid him gaze upon that slave, and vow eternal enmity to the accursed system which put him there—then, Christian friends, would you feel, and put forth your energies. Then would fathers feel, then would mothers feel, then would the child lift up its fervent prayer that this tyranny might fall. They have now invented an instrument of torture which, while it appears insignificant, is in reality most terrific. You are aware that we cannot take a vessel unless we find slaves on board, or instruments in which slaves are to be enchained. Now there have been discovered, packed up in a barrel of sugar, instruments of torture enough to load a whole ship. It was shown to me the other day, and I was perfectly astonished how it could be made an instrument of torture. I asked whether it was to be put on the tongue. They said, 'No; find out, if you can;' but I could not. It is a small piece of iron of a long square shape, made exactly to fit the four fingers, intended to be driven on over them, and then beaten down on an anvil. When each hand is thus served the victim is powerless. If you think there is no torture in this, tie a piece of string round your fingers for five minutes, and then you will learn by a painful throbbing at the finger-ends what these poor wretches are made to endure. I do not say this is done for the purpose of inflicting torture; but these instruments can be concealed anywhere, and on this account they are employed.

"Then, sir, there is that abomination of abominations, that liberty stained with human guilt, that temple of freedom surrounded by whips, and tears, and blows — there is Christianized, enslaved America. There is slavery coiling itself round the cross of Christ. There is that system of horrid wrong which would degrade the ever-blessed God, and make him the author of the iniquity which man has introduced. I long that that temple of liberty may stand, in order that those men, darkened by transgression, may free themselves from the cumbrous load of guilt that presses them to the dust, and say to their fellow Christians and fellow men, 'Arise, stand fast in the liberty wherewith Christ hath made you free.' These are mighty subjects of contemplation; they fill the spirit, they light up the soul with more than ordinary energy. I have but one life here on earth, but if the immolation of that life would produce the liberation of those enslaved millions of human beings, gladly would I surrender it at the call of Him whose I am and whom I serve. Christian friends, fathers, mothers, say not, 'Mr. Knibb, you will disturb our repose to-night; we shall not sleep for thinking of the slave and of his tortures!' If it costs you so much to hear of it, what must it be to see it? And if it costs so much to see it, what must it be to feel it? Christian women, the African woman has feelings as well as you. The African mother loves her child, and frequently she dies rather than surrender that child to the cruel task imposed upon it. O, then, by all the sympathies you possess, by that prayer-hearing God to whom we all fervently appeal, by all the principles of divine truth, which, when arrayed in their energy against the monster, must finally destroy him, I bid you, one and all, consecrate yourselves once more to the missionary cause. Triumph we will, triumph we must, and triumph we shall, for God has said it, and we believe that every word which he has spoken shall assuredly be fulfilled."

During the progress of his journey he wrote a letter to his wife, from which the following is an extract:—"With mingled emotions of gratitude and sorrow, I sit down to pen my last letter to you ere I leave for Jamaica—gratitude to the Author of all my mercies, sorrow that I have no more improved them. You will be pleased that God has given me favour in the eyes of his people, and that a hearty response has been given to the appeal made. To him, to him alone will we give praise, who is the author of all our mercies, and the guide of our lives. And this will we do together when we meet again, should God permit the much longed for blessing."

He attended the sixth annual meeting of the British and Foreign Anti-Slavery Society, and there told once more his harrowing tale of oppression and wrong. Towards the conclusion of his speech he said: —

> "My friends, I believe these difficulties will pass away. We shall have been prepared by our trials for future action; and I can assure you that we are determined not to let Jamaica sink so long as we can plead on her behalf. We are not disheartened at all. The sympathy we have received will cheer us on in our missions, and especially in our schools. There is a helping hand and a helping heart still to be found in England. The negroes are as grateful a people as any on the face of the earth, and I think no more fervent prayers are presented than those offered by the emancipated population of the west. They are trodden down, and an attempt is made again to enslave them; but our free cottages stand forth the glory of the land, and I believe the time will come when all these efforts will recoil upon the heads of those who have made them. I mean this, sir, that we shall have young men arise as planters,—they are beginning to arise—men who will bring wives with them, and spread their social influence around, when those men who see nothing good in the black and everything good in the white, will have gone to their account. The result will, I believe, be peaceful, happy, and triumphant. I do consider it a manifest token of the protection of Heaven, that none of our old missionary brethren have been called away in the midst of these exciting scenes. One and twenty years have I trod that island, and three or four others have also been preserved. I know other and younger brethren who have more piety and energy; but they have not the same hold of the people. We are determined that our influence shall be directed to the welfare of the whole community; but the peasant shall not be crushed."

The reference made in this passage to the preservation of "the old missionary brethren," is now very affecting. In how short a space after the delivery of it have both Knibb and Burchell been laid in the grave! It was a mercy, however, that their lives were preserved so long. They were spared to see the great object they contemplated carried through, and if some difficulties remain to be surmounted, these may be regarded as only a challenge to those "younger brethren" to whom they have bequeathed their toil, to verify the estimate which their distinguished precursor had formed of them.

On the evening of the 1st of July a valedictory meeting was held at Finsbury Chapel. The address on this occasion was delivered by the writer of this volume, and it might seem egotistical to insert any portion of it here. Since, however, it was delivered in the name of the committee, and has been deemed an accurate expression of their sentiments, I venture to insert so much of it as relates to Knibb personally. I spoke as follows: —

"How short a time it is, brother Knibb, since you sat where you sit now, in circumstances precisely similar, when the kindly voice of our esteemed brother, Dr. Godwin, breathed into your ears sentiments which were felt in all our hearts! We were taking leave of you then on your return to the burning clime, I will not quite say, in the hope that we should see your face on earth no more, but in hope, certainly, that you might be permitted to spend the remainder of your days—and those many—in evangelical labours, for the welfare of the race for whom your efforts hitherto have achieved so much. Suddenly you have appeared amongst us again, to the surprise of the community, though not altogether to the surprise of the committee. And a question has probably started up in many minds, whether there can have been a just occasion for your again encountering the fatigue and hazard of crossing the Atlantic, and for your again abandoning for so considerable a time the duties of your station in Jamaica. It affords me much pleasure to say here, in the name and on behalf of the committee, that they fully appreciate the motives which led to your visit. Whether it was necessary that one should be sent from Jamaica hither in the perplexed and trying circumstances of our beloved brethren in that island, it was for them to judge; and since they judged it was necessary, you did well to come. You came as a generous and not a selfish advocate, to plead for relief from perplexity and difficulty in which you did not individually share; to plead, therefore, for others whom you love, rather than for yourself. As highly, I may say—and I say it with equal pleasure—as highly do the committee appreciate the course you have pursued. You have been a faithful and a feeling advocate. You have pleaded for your brethren in a manner worthy of your love to them. But you have not been a blind partisan. You have not sought to conceal any of the elements of the case, or to force any arguments beyond their just and proper bearing. Desirous of obtaining relief for them that are in difficulty, you have not been desirous of cherishing, on their part, an undue leaning upon the committee or the society in England, or of concealing the resources and capabilities which the churches of Jamaica possess for independent and sustained action."

"And now that your business is done, you are on your return. It is enough on this occasion to say, that our feelings in parting with you now are such as they have ever been; or if it be permitted to say more than this, no more can be said than that these feelings are strengthened and confirmed. We find you to be what we ever found you, and acknowledge that you are unchanged, save in the maturity which advancing life of necessity involves, or ought to involve. We find you unchanged in the piety, the simplicity, the ardour, the generosity, the holy consecration, which we have always found in you, which we bless God for giving you, and bless him still more for sustaining and keeping alive. And now that you are about to confide yourself again to the frail bark that shall plough the bosom of the mighty deep, may He that hath the winds in his fist charge them to bear you safely to your desired haven, and grant you there length of days to labour for those you have loved so well, and in the midst of whom God hath blessed your labours so largely! But if it be interesting tous to part with you, how interesting will it be to them to receive you! And if the vessel in which you shall embark shall, with the marvellous precision characteristic of navigation only in the latest days, reach the place of its destination at the hour appointed, and bring you among your friends on the eve of the 1st of August, that ever-memorable day, in Jamaica at least, on the completion of the seventh year and of the first seven years of freedom, supplanting long dominant and pernicious slavery, what zest and interest shall it add to the commemoration of that event, and with what gladness of heart, and beaming of eye, and clapping of hands, shall your presence and return be welcomed there?"

The latter part of my address related to the position of the churches in Jamaica, and expressed the views of the committee in relation to their pecuniary independence. To this topic Knibb, who spoke immediately after me, pointedly referred. His response was couched in the following terms:—

"My respected and honoured friends,—The greatest pleasure connected with the appeal which has been addressed to me, has arisen from the fact that it will not only be heard by myself, but be read by my beloved brethren in the island to which I go. There has not been a single sentiment in that address which does not receive my most hearty concurrence. I should consider it one of the greatest curses that could by possibility light upon our voluntary churches in Jamaica, for them again to be sustained by the parent society at home. There are some circumstances to which, perhaps, for a short time I may be permitted to refer, not in the least for the purpose of weakening the force. or of lessening the propriety of that address which, in the name and on the behalf of the committee, has been delivered to me; but for the purpose of clearing up one or two points which, I think, in the minds of some of our friends may have been partially misunderstood. I refer to the fact that some of the churches in Jamaica have for years sustained themselves without any help from the society at home, and have, as far as they possibly could, carried out those principles which have been so properly adverted to in the present crisis of Jamaica affairs; and I do most sincerely trust that the efforts which I shall make to increase that spirit of independency which, I am firmly persuaded, is essential to the triumphs of the cross, will be quite as efficacious among my brethren in Jamaica, as my efforts to afford them relief have been among the committee at home.

"Nothing could be more disastrous, in my estimation, not merely to the cause of Jesus Christ in Jamaica, but to the great cause we are attempting to carry on, than any further dependence by the churches of Jamaica on the funds of our Missionary Society, although there may be isolated cases in some of our infant churches, which are not large, nor have they been for any length of time set on foot; but I do most sincerely trust, and would most fervently pray, that myself and those other of my brethren who are placed in more favourable situations, may continually impress upon the minds of those committed to our charge the paramount duty of their not merely supporting their own pastors, but of extending help, as far as they possibly can, to their sister churches that are in distress. It would not merely affect, in my estimation, the progress of the Redeemer's cause in different parts of the world, but it would produce the most deadening effect upon the churches of Christ themselves. As far as our influence has gone, we have endeavoured to impress upon those committed to our charge, not merely the duty but the privilege of supporting the gospel of God's dear Son. It was at our request, in connexion with your concurrence, that the African mission was undertaken.

"The themes discussed by my respected brother, Mr. Hinton, and addressed to me, have often been discussed at our missionary tables and our stations abroad; and I am perfectly confident, with respect to most of my brethren in Jamaica—I wish I could say with respect to all—that their appeal to you for pecuniary aid is quite as distressing to them as it can be to you. Gladly would they have relieved themselves if they possibly could. There may have been, in some cases, some inadvertency and impropriety in extending missionary labours to so great a degree, and they have been overtaken in the midst of this work by circumstances to which it is not necessary for me here to advert; but I do most sincerely trust that every feature of the address, in all its parts and in all its bearings, will be carried out, whatever difficulty it may involve, and whatever trouble it may bring upon us, so that our churches may be, as they ought to be, perfectly independent of foreign aid for the maintenance of the worship of God.

"Having thus referred to the principal parts of the address which has been delivered, I wish to leave it deeply impressed upon the minds of this Christian auditory, that nothing could have exceeded the kindness and the urbanity of the committee, in all the transactions in which I have been engaged with them. I undertook the office which I have executed with extreme reluctance; I would not have come on it if I could have avoided it. Until stern duty forced upon me this employment, no arguments would have induced me to forsake the beloved people of my charge and the endearments of social life, to come home on what I consider one of the most unwelcome errands on which it was possible to send a man. I have, however, been most agreeably disappointed. I have been affectionately welcomed, not only by the committee, but wherever I have gone; and at the simple tale of wrong, the guilty doings of the men that have brought us into this condition, there has been, not merely an approval of what the committee has done, but a hearty response as far as pecuniary aid could be given. Nor could the committee better testify their belief in the rectitude of their proceedings, or in the necessity of the case, than by almost immediately subscribing amongst themselves £1,500 sterling of the sum required to meet our present emergencies.

"I take leave of you, then, dear brethren, with a heart full of love, surrounded as I have been for the last two months with exciting scenes, travelling hither and thither; in a few short hours, amid the calm and quiet of an Atlantic voyage, I shall have time more fully to meditate on those great principles which have been called into action, and which, I am perfectly convinced, must be maintained in all their purity and all their fulness, if the work of mercy is to be fully achieved in the islands of the west. I stand among you within a few short days of entering upon the twenty-second year of my missionary work, and for a few moments I will refer to the past, and to what God has performed for Jamaica. Twenty-one years ago, when I landed, there were only four missionaries connected with the denomination to which we belong. During the first seven years everything appeared dark and gloomy with respect to freedom. Immersed in those scenes of cruelty which often filled my heart with anguish, I at length beheld one of the deacons of my own church stretched on his back and flogged for praying in my own house. As soon as that scene was transacted, I made the resolve, calmly and deliberately, that I would watch every movement, and seize any favourable opportunity that Providence should present to undo the heavy burdens, and to bid the oppressed go free. In the various meetings I have attended, not merely in this city but in other parts of England, I know perfectly well that some individuals have said, 'Yes, but Mr. Knibb speaks too strongly.' Ah! you must see things for yourselves. When you see your deacons flogged, when you behold them stretched on the ground, hear the cracking of the whip, and see the blood stream from their bodies, you will speak too. Little did I think how I was to speak; but within one short year of that, after my first seven years were closed, the insurrection came, with all its untold horrors. You have heard of them—we felt them. In the destruction of our chapels, and in the various scenes that then were transacted, colonial slavery met its death.

"Then unknown to you and unknown to the world, I was forced from that den of infamy, with a heart bleeding at every pore, just emerged from a felon's dock and from a gloomy prison, with my congregation scattered, many of the members of my church murdered, and multitudes of the faithful lashed, and peeled, and destroyed. I came home, and never shall I forget the three years' struggle, the incessant anxiety that pressed upon my spirit, as I passed through the length and breadth of this country, detailing the negro's wrongs, and asserting the negro's rights. Just seven years after that perfect freedom came. We had about the middle of it a semi-freedom, called apprenticeship. In the midst of these scenes the work of mercy extended, so that during the seven years which then closed, in connection with the labours of about twenty missionaries, 22,000 persons were baptized upon a profession of their faith in Jesus Christ. Then it was that Providence, by circumstances to which there is no need to refer now, called me to visit you again.

"And now, Christian friends, another seven years has rolled by. I was then pleased with the anticipation that no future work of agitation would fall to my lot; but it has not turned out so. At present there is a system of wrong and wickedness in Jamaica which must be put down, and which Christianity alone can put down. On returning to that land to meet those men whose actions I have exposed—I would expose them if they were ten thousand times as powerful as they are—I know perfectly well the difficulties that may yet beset my path; but I am not afraid of these difficulties. I have said nothing but what is true, and nothing but what ought to be said; and if tyranny will rise to oppress, Christianity must rise to destroy it.

"Farewell, then, Christian friends. I anticipate with pleasure and with joy once more meeting the beloved people of my charge. I will tell, and tell in tones of tenderness, what has been done by you; and I do most sincerely trust that that which has been so kindly said will be received in the spirit of Christ, and that it will induce the churches in Jamaica to strive yet more vigorously for the maintenance of that truth on which all their civil, their social, and their eternal happiness depends.

"And now, ere I go, let me address one or two words to the beloved young friends now in God's house. You, my dear young friends, have risen up, most of you, since I first trod the scenes which I have now described. What I wish to impress upon you is this, that the religion of Christ can sustain in every difficulty, and support in every emergency. If there has been one wish more constant in my heart than another during my brief sojourn in the land of my fathers, and while I have gazed upon the lovely forms of the youth in my native land, it has been that every one of them may be a child of God; that now, even now, they may seek after an interest in Him whose favour is life. It has been my lot—I say it not for boasting, God knows—to stand in some of the most trying positions in which a missionary could stand. More than once have I expected that a few brief hours would close my existence by a bloody death; and I tell you, to the honour of that Saviour whom I wish you to love, that I never felt so calm and so happy in my life as when the bayonet was at my breast, and I expected, perhaps in a moment, to be gone. There is that in the religion of the Son of God which can sustain in trial; and I have often thought that I should like to pass through those scenes again, if I could in connection with them enjoy that calm reliance upon the blood of God's dear Son which his mercy and grace then afforded. My beloved young friends, I commend this Saviour to you, I commend his cause to you. We and our fathers shall soon retire from the work; we expect you to take it up, and we know you never can take it up effectually until your hearts are right in the sight of God.

"Farewell! Farewell, ye members of the committee! Farewell, ye brethren of other denominations who have assisted and sustained us! Farewell, ye who have maintained the missionary work! It is joyous, it is triumphant. I retire from you with the motto, and I give it to you as a leading star, 'Let us work for Christ on earth, till we rest with Christ in heaven.' Farewell!"

Knibb left London for Southampton at six o'clock, on the morning of the 2nd of July, accompanied by his friends Mr. Haddon and Mr. Mark Moore, who were desirous of thus gratifying themselves, as well as of proving to him the sincerity of a long-established friendship. By previous arrangement, a company of nearly three hundred persons met him to breakfast in the school-room belonging to Portland Chapel, in that town, after which a large meeting assembled, attended by dissenting ministers of all denominations in Southampton and the surrounding neighbourhood, to the extent of thirty miles. W. Betts, Esq., took the chair, the Rev. T. Adkins offered an appropriate prayer, and Knibb delivered his last speech to an English audience, —a speech, as was remarked by some who had often heard him, delivered with as much freshness and vigour as if it had been on a theme upon which his feelings had been for the first time kindled. Previously to the breaking up of the meeting, and in order to avoid another formal taking leave, Knibb and his friends retired, and hastened, in the midst of a pitiless storm, on board the Thames steamer, lying three miles from the shore.

The following brief review of this visit, and of the manner in which he had executed the important mission with which he had been entrusted, occurs in a letter to Mr. Clarke, of Brown's Town, Jamaica, written after his embarkation:—"My parting meeting was a very affecting, and I hope a profitable one. Whatever my brethren may think of the result of my mission, it will ever be a source of pleasure to me that it was brought about without an angry word or thought. If in connection with the aid bestowed, I find a feeling of love, and a determination to act so as to free the mission from its present incumbrance, it will be remembered among the most felicitous scenes of my eventful life, and will amply repay all the domestic and social privation I have sustained."

I cannot conclude this chapter, and with it the history of Knibb's life in England, better than by inserting his Farewell Letter to the committee and his friends at large, as I find it in the *Missionary Herald* for August.

TO MR. ANGUS.

"*Baptist Mission House, Moorgate Street,*
"*London, June* 26, 1845.

"My dear Friend,—In taking my leave once more of the respected committee with whom I have so long been in friendly association, I would express to them, and to you, my sincere thanks for the uniform kindness which has marked all their proceedings in relation to the great and important topics which we have had to discuss and arrange, while I would breathe the fervent prayer that in all their future efforts for the advancement of the great cause of Christian missions, they may be guided by infinite wisdom, and blessed by almighty love.

"To those churches and individuals who have so kindly and efficiently responded to the appeal I have made on behalf of my beloved and honoured brethren in Jamaica, I return the tribute of a grateful heart. Often has their sympathy and kindness refreshed my spirit, and rendered easy and joyous my otherwise onerous duties. They, with their beloved pastors, will receive this expression of thankfulness from one who hopes yet to be borne on their hearts at the throne of the heavenly grace.

"Had my duties in Jamaica permitted, gladly had I visited other churches, both in England and Wales. This pleasure I must not enjoy, as the dear people of my charge need me at home.

"May I then say to those churches, Give me a proof of your love, in making on the second sabbath in August, a collection towards the object which brought me from Jamaica, that thus I may have the luxury of hearing that the whole sum of £6,000 has been collected without crippling the funds of the society, or their missions in the East and in beloved Africa, or the righteous resolve of the committee to commence immediate operations in China, and in the island of St. Domingo? The relief to the churches in Jamaica will be doubly welcome if this good work is thus performed.

"May I not hope, too, that my beloved friends the sabbath-school teachers, with whom I feel it an honour to identify myself, will assist in this good work, and by the formation of juvenile missionary societies in all their schools, yet further interest their youthful charge in the glorious work of Christian missions?

"Again I leave the land of my fathers, oppressed with the overwhelming kindness I have received. What untrodden paths are yet before me, and in what new spheres of operation I may be placed, I know not; but by grace I stand prepared to be anything or do anything my Father may command. Farewell, dear Christian friends; your kindness has often cheered my heart and sustained my spirit. Soon we shall meet above; and O what a meeting *there!* Onward let us press in the sacred cause; and in every struggle and in every conflict feeling our dependence on Jesus and his precious atonement, may our inmost spirit be baptized in the sentiment—

'Sinful, and weak, and helpless worms,
On thy kind arms we fall;
Be THOU our strength and righteousness
Our Saviour and our all.'"

◆

CHAPTER XIX.

FROM HIS RETURN TO JAMAICA TO HIS DEATH.

DURING this, his last voyage, Knibb enjoyed a high state of religious feeling. To Mr. and Mrs. Sherring, of Bristol, who to the exercise of Christian liberality had added many personal attentions, he poured out his heart in a very gratifying letter, from which I make the following citations: —

TO MR. AND MRS. SHERRING.

"*At Sea, off Madeira, from July* 5 *to* 10, 1845.

"Well, my dear friends, such is life; and thus we meet and part, until the close shall come. I felt much more in leaving England this time than I ever felt; I know not why, but so it is. The kindness I have received has been so far beyond my merits, that in the review, I am almost selfish enough to wish for its return. Well, such sweet society will be my portion for ever, if faithful unto death; and I fervently entreat your prayers that I may be accounted worthy of that privilege. O what an unspeakable mercy, to be permitted to do anything in the cause of Jesus, and to feel that he does accept and bless it! This honour we mutually possess, you in your appropriate sphere, and I in mine; and we can and will rejoice together, even on earth, while we anticipate the full realization of that joy when those who have sown and those who reap shall rejoice together for ever.

"O, my beloved brother and sister, what a *for ever* it is! How does the prospect cheer and animate! And shall it really be ours? O the preciousness of that blood which secures it all! It is to Him, and to him alone, that the glory belongs. Well, then, to him we are bound by ten thousand ties, and for him we will live.

'High heaven, that heard the solemn vow,
 That vow renew'd shall daily here;
Till in life's latest hour we bow,
 And bless in death a bond so dear.'

"Withdrawn as I now am from all public scenes of duty, and from the intercourse of Christian friends, my happiness, if I have any, must spring from private communion with God; and that is sweet—sweet with all its imperfections, while I pant for more conformity to his blessed will. Early on sabbath morning one of our passengers, a son of Alderman ———, died. He was taken worse about twelve o'clock, and by four in the morning his immortal spirit had fled, I fear quite unprepared. In the evening, sewed up in a rude hammock, his body was committed to the deep until the sea shall give up her dead. His cabin was close to mine, and I shall not soon forget the death-struggle I witnessed. I requested permission to speak to him and pray with him, but it was declined. O the awful end of the deceived sinner! Let me die the death of the righteous, sweetly breathing out my spirit in the arms of Jesus.

"I do not mind the sea, but the absence of Christian friends and Christian associations I painfully feel, especially after such rich enjoyment as I have had in England. Well, but the best Friend is here, and with him, and with the pilgrim's roll, I can hold sweet intercourse while traversing that sea he holds in his hand, and being wafted by those winds he has at his command. In a few short weeks I hope to mingle in the delightful scenes of home, and with my beloved wife and children, to raise once more an Ebenezer to the faithfulness of Him who hath done all things well; until in the assembly of the great congregation, praise and adoration shall ascend to him who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood, and hath made us kings and priests unto God.

"And now, my beloved fellow travellers to heaven, accept the thanks I present for the many tokens of your kind and Christian regard, while my petitions rise to that God whom you serve, that every new-covenant blessing may abundantly descend upon you. Among the most pleasing recollections of my late visit is the converse I have had with you both. Perhaps, with my beloved wife, I may renew it on earth; if not, we shall by grace divine in heaven.

> 'There on a green and flowery mount
> Our weary souls shall sit;
> And with transporting joys, recount
> The labours of our feet.'"

To this I add two short extracts from other letters written at sea, which breathe a similar spirit. To Mr. Angus he says, "Well, my dear brother, another eventful period in my history has passed, and public excitement has given place to retirement in the small cabin in which I write. Here I would prepare by daily and hourly communion with God, for the future scenes that may arise. Hitherto he has helped and guided, and I hope that still his kind hand will be upon me for good. Without this what a poor insignificant being I am—how worthless! how wicked!—but he will guide, he will bless. I have his promise, his own sweet promise, and on it I can rely." To Mr. Sturge he says, "My health, I am happy to say, is quite good; and I am anticipating with prayerful delight yet further engagements in the service of my adorable Saviour. Just so long as it shall please him would I work in his vineyard; and then, retiring from the field, hope for mercy through the blood of the Lamb."

In a letter to Mr. Town, of Leeds, he gives a few particulars of his voyage which deserve insertion. His proceedings at Madeira are highly characteristic.

TO JOSEPH TOWN, ESQ.

"*At Sea, July*, 1845.

"We made the beautiful island of Madeira on the eighth day after our leaving Southampton. Here I was anxious to see Dr. Kalley, who had suffered imprisonment for the cause of Jesus; but as he had left the island, I was disappointed. There are now in the wretched prison I saw about twenty persons, chiefly females, who are placed there for becoming protestants. One of them has been condemned to death for this noble act. I longed to have an interview with them, but could not obtain it. I saw some of them through the grating of their cell, and lifted up my humble prayer that they might have grace given them to persevere unto the end. I wrote my name on the convent walls, 'William Knibb, Baptist Missionary, Jamaica.' How long it will be permitted to remain there I cannot say, but I suppose it will be thought to pollute the place. My fellow passengers are a mixed group of slave-owners, Jews, merchants, and officers of the army and navy; they are generally very pleasant, and we get on very well. On sabbath, the 13th, I preached to them and to the crew, from these words, 'Godliness is profitable unto all things, having the promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come.' My congregation numbered nearly a hundred, and appeared to pay much attention to the service. Having cast in the precious seed, I would pray that the blessing of Heaven may rest thereon."

On board this vessel he met with an inhabitant of Cuba, who having joined in a petition to the governor for the abolition of the slave-trade, felt it necessary to secure his personal safety by flight. He was very much interested by this circumstance, and in noticing it to Mr. Sturge he says, "I rejoice in the fact, that where we least anticipate it, the seeds of liberty are striking deep their roots, thus hastening on the glorious day when this earth shall no longer be polluted by the breath of a tyrant, or disgraced by the existence of a slave."

The septennary of freedom was celebrated in Jamaica with the usual spirit, but Knibb was not present; he arrived at Falmouth on the *evening* of the first of August. No sooner was his arrival known, however, than preparations were made for a grand demonstration of public feeling. This was concerted for Monday, the 4th of the same month. Mrs. Knibb, in a letter to Mr. Town, dated June 16, 1846, speaking of "the tumultuous rejoicings" of that day, says, "I never saw any thing to equal it. The procession was more than a mile long, on a road as wide as any road I have seen in England. It commenced at a free township called Granville (after Granville Sharp), and was said to contain more than a thousand horses, and twenty different kinds of carriages. On the long line of road we could see nothing but a forest of heads. My dear husband," adds this affectionate and devoted wife, "I know, felt gratified—he must have done so, for people had come from all parts to welcome his return—but his thoughts were with the friends in England whom he had just left; and he kept saying to me, 'I wish Mr. and Mrs. Town were here—I wish Mr. and Mrs. Sherring were here'—with others whom he named."

This vast multitude, with various banners interspersed, moved in grand procession into Falmouth, loudly cheering as they passed the different estates, and pausing in front of the baptist chapel. As many as could get into this building having entered it, the multitudes who could not dispersed. The usual business of a public meeting was now proceeded with, Mr. Edward Knibb in the chair. Knibb's speech took its character from the circumstances in which he found himself placed. It will be recollected that, on his last appearance at a public meeting in Falmouth, he was in apparently cordial co-operation with the planters. The *entente cordiale*, however (to borrow a diplomatic phrase now of familiar import), had been of short duration. The truths which he had found it necessary to tell in England had aroused anew, and raised to its former pitch, the malice of his ancient enemies, and the colonial papers had already, like so many blood-hounds, been let loose upon him. He took the opportunity which the meeting on the 4th of August afforded of replying to their abuse, and he did so in his usual undaunted manner, offering to meet any gentleman in the court-house for public discussion on any of the topics involved in his late speeches. I believe the challenge was never accepted. His old enemies were bent upon punishing him in a different way. "The Jamaica press," he writes to Mr. Sherring on the 21st of August, "is full of rancour, quite as much so as when I advocated the abolition of slavery. What they are not going to do with me when the House of Assembly meets it is hard to say, and certainly I do not care. They may do just what they please, but not with me, and that they will find when their threats are attempted to be put in execution, if ever such be the case, which I very much doubt."

It was but a passing glance, however, that Knibb gave to his adversaries. He threw himself with all his energies into missionary work, and he put his hand to many objects; but indications began to appear that his physical strength was decaying. He had a severe bilious attack in August, and several periods of indisposition occurred during the months of September and October. He continued his labours, nevertheless, with a determined assiduity which probably hastened the crisis. During the last few weeks of his life he was almost incessantly engaged in social or public meetings of various kinds: on the 30th of October he was at a missionary meeting at Bethtephil; on the 31st he attended a public meeting at Salter's Hill; on the following Tuesday he was at a missionary meeting at Mount Carey; and from that time till Friday he was closely engaged in consultation with brethren on the affairs of their stations.

Of the few remaining days of his life, I shall present to the reader an account from the pen of Mr. Abbott, who was with him. It is taken from a letter to Mr. Sherring, dated December 1st, 1845, and is as follows:—

TO R. B. SHERRING, ESQ.

"*St. Ann's Bay, December* 1, 1845.

"An apparently trivial circumstance, but one which now affords ground for pleasing reflection, led to my engaging some weeks previously, to spend with him at Falmouth the sabbath, November 9th, which proved to be his last on earth. We travelled together from Falmouth to Mount Carey on the 4th of November, and returned to Falmouth on the 7th, when he appeared to be in the enjoyment of good health. On the following day I accompanied him to Granville, a township formed under his auspices, and assisted him in laying the corner-stone of a dwelling house for one of the villagers. After prayer he spoke for a few minutes to the family and friends who had assembled together, and concluded by saying to the head of the family, 'This is the first corner-stone I have laid in your village, but you can tell your neighbours that I will do the same for all of them when they are ready.' How little did he suspect, and as little did I, that that was to be the last as well as the first! The next morning, the sabbath, we walked together to the house of God at six o'clock, and both engaged at the prayer meeting. At eleven o'clock he baptized forty-two persons, and was unusually touching and solemn in his remarks to each. At the close of the baptizing I preached from John vi. 29, and a short time after we unitedly administered the supper of our Lord. He had published that I would preach in the evening also, but having recently suffered from an attack of influenza, I begged to be excused, with which he kindly complied, and preached himself—his *last* sermon—from 1 Tim. i. 11—'The glorious gospel of the blessed God,' or as he delighted to say, the glorious gospel of the *happy*

God.' I did not hear him for the same reason that I did not preach—i. e. to avoid exposure to the night air; but on his return from chapel he appeared highly elated, and we sat together for about an hour, when at my request he recapitulated the leading particulars of his sermon. I have spent many days with our now sainted brother during fifteen years, in scenes of prosperity and adversity, of sorrow and joy, but I do not remember ever to have spent one with him more happily. He was in a calm, solemn, equable, happy frame of mind, and he remarked to me that he had been more pleased with his people during that day, than at any previous time since his return from England.

"I must now come to the sad part of my tale. Our brother had what some have not inaptly termed an iron constitution, and he depended so much upon his non-liability to colds and other ailments, against which most persons have carefully to guard, as to expose himself greatly, and occasionally unnecessarily.

"Thus on the night of his last sabbath, though much exhausted after preaching, and in a state of profuse perspiration, he walked home through a shower of rain without cloak or umbrella, and on the following morning he dressed, came down stairs, and remained until he complained to me of a chilliness and pain in the back, without putting on any flannel shirt, which he was accustomed to wear. He went to Kettering the same day, and was very unwell on Tuesday; on Wednesday low typhoid fever came on, and continued until Friday, when yellow fever of the most malignant character supervened, and in a few short hours terminated his sufferings. He continued sensible until one o'clock in the morning of Saturday, just nine hours before his departure, when delirium came on—then black vomit, the certain harbinger of death."

Some further particulars of his last illness are supplied by a letter from Mrs. Knibb to Mr. Town, written on the 8th of December. I take from it the following extract:—

TO JOSEPH TOWN, ESQ.

"On Sunday the 9th of November, he baptized fifty persons* at Falmouth. His address to them was most touching to all who heard it, and will, I think, never be forgotten by any. On that day, and for some days before, he complained of being poorly, but every now and then he would forget his feelings, and be as cheerful as ever. On Monday we all came up to this place (Kettering), where a meeting of the Western Union was to take place on Tuesday and Wednesday. He was very cheerful all the way here, and tried to cheer Kate, who was feeling and looking very poorly. After we reached home he lay down a good deal, but did not complain much, and I thought his weariness arose from his having had such a hard day's work on the sabbath. On Tuesday he went round with me to look at the arrangements I had made for the friends, and said they would do very nicely. After this he scarcely left his study and bed-room. On Wednesday we sent for a medical man, who immediately bled him, and gave him powerful medicines. Soon afterwards we sent to Falmouth for Dr. Anderson, who has been accustomed to attend our family, and he did not leave the house, except for three or four hours, until the melancholy scene had closed, which was on Saturday morning at ten o'clock. I cannot now attempt to describe that sad scene. The struggle was hard, for death came with rapid strides upon a strong man armed, and the contest was sad and terrible."

---

* Mr. Abbott states the number to have been forty-two.

Thus was Knibb arrested by the hand of death in the midst of his labours and his usefulness, and snatched at once from the grasp of his enemies and the bosom of his friends, at the early age of forty-two. Such was the will of his Lord.

Before adverting to the exercises of his mind in his dying hours, I shall adduce some very gratifying proofs that he was eminently prepared for his great change.

"It was evident to all our friends," says Mrs. Knibb, "and especially to myself, long before his last illness, but more so since his return from England, that he was rapidly growing in meetness for the inheritance of the saints in light. He was so earnest in pleading with sinners, so mild and faithful in reproving those who, he thought, did not live up to their high profession and privileges, and so animated and heavenly-minded at the ordinance of the Lord's supper, that although I enjoyed the services, I used to fear there was too much of heaven in them for him to be long an inhabitant of earth. He would often say after our return home,—'Is not the atonement a delightful subject? And then the thought that we shall soon be with Jesus, and see him as he is! I sometimes long to realize it to its full extent.' These conversations always ended in a reference to our being separated from each other and the children, when he would say, 'Well, God has been very gracious to us, and has spared us many years to each other. The separation will be of a much shorter duration than the time we have spent together; and besides, the larger part of our family will soon be reunited.' Notwithstanding this rapid growth in divine things, however, and my own impressions, I could not until within the few last hours of his life, bring myself to believe that we should so soon lose him, as I vainly thought that his work was not done yet."

Shortly before he left England, his mind was deeply impressed by a sermon which he heard from myself. The subject was the difference between the religion of the conscience and the religion of the heart, and the discourse was founded on the parable of the unclean spirit, Matt. xii. 43, 45. "He spoke of it to me," says Mr. Abbott, "during our first conversation at St. Ann's Bay, the day after he landed; and as we rode together towards Kettering the same afternoon he spoke of little else. It frequently formed the theme of his conversations in the family, and of his addresses from the pulpit."

That he quitted his native shores in an elevated state of pious feeling is evident from the extracts of his correspondence which I have already inserted, and that he continued to enjoy the same happiness after his arrival in Jamaica appears from a letter which he wrote to Mr. Clark, of Brown's Town, a few weeks afterwards. From this letter the following are extracts:—

TO MR. CLARK.

"*Lucea, August*, 1845.

"Yours found me in bed with a severe bilious attack, brought on as I think by anxiety and travelling. I do not anticipate a long detention here in consequence, but my Father only knows whether this will be the case, and I can leave it in his hands. I am an unworthy servant, but I love my Master, and I hope he loves me.

"Being sick from home is not very pleasant, but it is generally my lot; yet it is my Father who so orders it, and he cannot be wrong. If there be one truth I love more than another, it is the impossibility for God to err, and I suppose that heaven will make us in this respect like him. O, how sweet the thought—

'There shall we see his face
And never, never sin.'

I care not where heaven is, or of what its pleasures are composed; the thought that as a guilty sinner, ransomed through Jesus, I shall get there and never sin, is quite enough for me."

Of his dying experience I gather from different sources the following account.

"Brother Burchell and myself," says Mr. Abbott, "and several of our brethren, were with him during the whole time of his brief illness, and had the mournful privilege of hearing his last words, and of beholding his last gaze. No danger was apprehended until noon on Friday, when our beloved brother himself evidently thought that his hours were numbered; but his mind was calm, and his faith strong. He said to me during the last conversation I had with him alone, that he mourned deeply over the follies and sins of his past life. I replied, 'True, and so do the best and holiest of men.' 'But,' said he, 'I am neither the best nor the holiest of men;' and he added, 'It is an awful thing to die. I have no hope but in the perfect atonement of the Son of God.

'A guilty, weak and helpless worm,
On Jesu's arms I fall.''

The accuser of the brethren was not permitted to harass our dear friend. He continued calm and peaceful, uttering occasionally expressions similar to the above, until delirium drew a veil over the scenes of time, and closed our communion with him in this vale of tears."

"During his last illness," says Mrs. Knibb, "he always looked at each of us (she is speaking of herself and the children) anxiously and affectionately; and several times he said to Kate and Annie, 'My poor girls, you will soon be fatherless. Live near to God by prayer, and work for him. Do all you can to keep up the schools. And mind you take care of your poor mother. She has had an anxious, trying, and often a rough path; and she will need all the sympathy and tenderness you can show her.'"

Mr. Philippo, who was compelled to leave Kettering in the course of this fatal illness, writes as follows:—"On my rising to leave he looked at me, his eyes filling with tears (I have no doubt at the recollection of my trials, and of his inability to help me), threw his arms around my neck, and kissed me most affectionately; adding soon afterwards, in reply to some observations I had made in reference to his present circumstances, 'Some on boards and some on broken pieces of the ship, and so it came to pass that they escaped all safe to land.' He grasped my hand again on leaving, again tenderly embraced me, and with a look of affection I cannot describe, and with an emotion and solemnity which might well have been regarded as an indication of his approaching end, invoked a blessing on my head, and bade me farewell."

Several of his missionary brethren were at Kettering during his illness, and a few of the words he dropped to them have been recorded.

"I am not afraid to die," said he to some of them; "the blood of Christ cleanseth from all sin, both of omission and commission, and that blood is my only trust." "O that I might reach the port," said he to another; "how happy should I then be!" When a brother repeated Cowper's well-known lines,

"Behind a frowning providence
He hides a smiling face,"

he said, "O yes! but what bliss to see the cloud dispersed, and the smile of God resting upon me!"

"There was," says Mr. Abbott, "as is usual in congestive fevers," much languor and disinclination to converse; and as there *was* hope, however feeble, entertained of his recovery, we did not like to disturb him by asking questions, after we felt satisfied that, whatever the issue might be, he was ready for the final summons. Soon after midnight on Friday delirium came on. The first decisive intimation we had of it was his giving out and singing, in a loud and clear voice, to the tune of Jackson's, the hymn commencing thus:—

'Happy beyond description he
That fears the Lord his God.'

He then offered a connected and most beautiful prayer, in which he compared the union of the dissenting congregations in Falmouth on the previous sabbath evening, when he preached his last sermon, to a marriage. At the close of the prayer (he gave no address) he said to us who were standing at his bedside, 'The service is over; you may go.' I do not think full consciousness returned afterwards; although on the morning of his departure, he uttered two or three coherent sentences, and among them, 'All is well.'"

The news of this affliction spread with almost the rapidity of lightning. Every one that heard it repeated it to his neighbour, and it covered all faces with sadness. The brief but touching annunciation, "Massa Knibb dead," passed from lip to lip, till within an incredibly short space the whole region knew the calamity that had befallen it. At seven o'clock in the evening of the same day, the body, attended by several hundred persons, members of the church and congregation, was removed to the mission-house at Falmouth. "On its entrance into the town," says the *Falmouth Post*, "persons of all classes joined the mournful procession, and the cry of lamentation that was raised afforded a convincing proof of the estimation in which the deceased was held, even by those who had been strongly opposed to his political movements."

The interment took place on Sunday morning, at eleven o'clock. By daylight the streets were crowded with persons from all parts of Trelawney and the adjoining parishes. The remains, carried by six of the deacons of the church, were followed from the mission-house to the chapel by some members of the family, by several missionary brethren and their wives, by the deacons and leaders of the neighbouring churches, by magistrates, merchants, and most of the respectable inhabitants of the town, and an immense concourse of people, (the number was estimated at nearly eight thousand) some of whom had come from a distance of forty miles. The procession was solemn, and would have been characterized by absolute stillness, if the half-stifled sounds of partially suppressed grief had not broken the silence; but when the corpse was carried into the chapel, the vast multitude could no longer control their emotions, and they "lifted up their voices and wept." "The place," says Mr. Dendy, "was literally a Bochim; and every one engaged in the service had to restrain his own feelings, lest he should render the grief of others absolutely uncontrollable." The funeral service in the chapel having been concluded, the body was carried to the grave in the chapel yard, where, after some further exercises, it was interred.

The address in the chapel was given by Mr. Burchell, from Revelation xxi. 4; and an oration was delivered at the grave by Mr. Kerr, a Wesleyan missionary. Mr. Edmondson, Wesleyan, and Mr. Thorburn, of the Scottish Free Church, also took part in the service.

In addition to the tribute of popular respect paid to Knibb at his funeral, many gratifying expressions of sympathy and condolence were received by the family, from persons of all religious denominations in the island. For the most part, also, the public press in Jamaica bore an honourable testimony to his character. That political animosity should in any instance have survived him, is to be regretted much more for the living than for the dead.

CHAPTER XX.

ESTIMATE OF HIS CHARACTER AND LABOURS.

Having conducted this diversified narrative to its close, I address myself to the concluding portion of my task, an estimate of the character and labours of this distinguished missionary.

Knibb was tall and athletic. His frame was large and firmly built. His constitution was robust, and his health vigorous. His head was ample, and its conformation strikingly indicative of the benevolent and moral qualities. His countenance was ruddy and open, vividly expressive of his emotions, and generally beaming with kindness, but capable of glowing with intense indignation. He had altogether a noble and engaging aspect, and he was capable of great and long-continued exertion, both of body and mind.

With his immense physical power was combined great constitutional activity. His boyish energy in play, and his youthful tendency to frolic, ripened into an extraordinary spirit of enterprize, which led both to the conception of large schemes, and to great promptitude and energy in the execution of them. One finished, he seized another. He may almost be said to have thought nothing impossible.

His intellectual powers, without being either profound or of extensive range, were eminently adapted to practical affairs; and within their natural sphere, they were both quick and vigorous. He possessed a large amount of good sense, and he speedily formed a just estimate of men and things. He became deeply versed in the philosophy of common life, and well acquainted with the springs of human action. If in malice he was a child, in understanding he was a man.

The moral sentiments were in him of great strength. He was eminently benevolent. He lived in an atmosphere of kindness, and may be said to have carried it about with him. He loved to see all happy, and he himself was never happier than in contributing to the happiness of all. His sense of justice was as strong as his sentiment of benevolence. Himself remote from doing a wrong, he could not bear to see one inflicted. He sided at once with those whom he thought injured, and had become an active partizan while others were only expressing their indignation. If he thus acquired occasionally an air of pugnacity, this was prevented from being unamiable by its uniform subserviency to generous purposes.

To these characteristics must be added fearlessness. His courage was indomitable. It was impossible to intimidate him. Let him be convinced that his cause was right, and no power on earth could divert him from it. His resolution, once taken, was immovable.

He was master of a genuine and commanding eloquence. His voice, the excellent natural qualities of which he had sedulously improved by cultivation, was melodious, of great compass, and of tremendous power; seldom however, even in its loudest notes, losing its melody. His vocabulary was remarkably copious, but peculiar. His choice and arrangement of words, although generally sufficiently correct, and often highly felicitous, was frequently singular, and occasionally inappropriate. A circumstance is known which accounts for this. His vocabulary was not formed by extended study, but by a habit of reading Johnson's Dictionary at meal times, while employed as a compositor. He is stated to have read the quarto edition three times through, with all the illustrations. As a speaker, on more important occasions he availed himself in part of the aid of the pen, writing perhaps the introduction, the peroration, and some particular passages, which are now not difficult of detection; but I have not met with any case in which I think the whole, or even the major part of his address was pre-composed. It was partly owing to this circumstance, perhaps, that his speeches were not characterized by any severe precision of language, or any close concatenation of thought; but, if he lost anything in this respect, he gained more than an equivalent in the liberty which his method gave him to render his addresses instinct with life and feeling. They were pre-eminently adapted to carry with them large and diversified auditories. For Knibb to have written his speeches would have been to have destroyed his oratorical power. It was not characteristic of him as a speaker to neglect the understanding, or intentionally to lead it astray; but it was his more especial aim to appeal to the heart, and to engage the feelings. He had just the kind of eloquence which, throughout his life, he wanted. It abounded in touches of the pathetic, and was remarkably natural and simple. He rose to his highest altitude when he met with opposition. Then his countenance and his whole person seemed to expand themselves; he grew suddenly taller; his excited spirit seemed to boil over; and his voice, in its loudest and most elevated tones, made the largest halls ring with words of defiance. I think, however, that his eloquence, admirable as it was, was liable to one drawback—his epithets were occasionally too strong. That they were so appeared from the fact that they generally failed to carry his auditors with them. We used to listen to them with a smile which denoted our astonishment, but not with the full-toned sympathy which it is the triumph of a speaker to secure. One of his great felicities as an orator undoubtedly lay in his having so good a cause, and an unsuspected devotedness to it. Before he spoke, the auditory was for the most part on his side.

Of the extraordinary power with which his addresses fell upon general auditories, and even on persons of the most cultivated class, the following reminiscences of a meeting at Aberdeen, in the year 1833, may be taken as affording an example. I have been favoured with them by Mr. Pottenger, of Bradford.

"The meeting was held," says Mr. Pottenger, "in the place of worship at which the Rev. Mr. Simpson then preached, and which was capable of holding a large congregation. The platform was filled by magistrates, merchants, professors from both colleges, and ministers of all denominations in the city; while the building was crammed to excess by persons of all ranks, eager to see and to hear this champion of the negroes. Knibb felt that the occasion was a great one; and his address that night surpassed all that his most devoted friends had anticipated. One tale of woe followed another in rapid succession, and either excited the feelings of the auditors to indignation, or drew floods of tears from their eyes. The fire of eloquence which burst from the speaker may be said to have electrified the assembly. At one moment they were convulsed with laughter, and the next they were sobbing aloud, or clenching their fists ready to knock down the monster which the magician had conjured up in their midst; and, as when the great orator of Greece had delivered his orations, the Athenians were accustomed to say, 'Let us march against Philip,' so when the man of God had finished his noble speech on that memorable occasion, the multitude seemed to say, 'Let us march against slavery.'

"On the platform near me sat a gentleman, I believe either a professor in one of the colleges or a minister in one of the parish churches, whose spirit was deeply stirred within him. As the speaker continued to expose and denounce the abominations of colonial slavery, he made free use of a large stick which he held in his hand; but at length, after one of the finest bursts of eloquence to which I ever listened, he suddenly jumped on his feet, exclaiming, 'This is Demosthenes.'

"Thirteen years at least have passed away since that meeting rang the knell of slavery; but even now the speaker, the excited multitude, the shouts of applause, the tears of grief, and the whole scene, are as fresh in my recollection as they were that night, when I went home wondering at what I had seen and heard."

The elements I have enumerated would have rendered Knibb in any circumstances an influential man; their consecration to the actual pursuits of his life is due to religion. Of his piety it is now quite safe to say that it was sincere, vigorous, and elevated; it was, however, strongly marked by his constitutional peculiarities. He was not merely the Christian; he was, if I may be allowed the expression, Knibb Christianized. His consecration to God was profound, his communion with God was habitual, and his joy in God was, generally speaking, exalted. He walked with God, commonly employing an hour or more before day-light in exercises of piety. Thus the spirituality of his mind was perpetually invigorated, and the remarkable happiness of his religious experience sustained. The joy of the Lord was his strength.

From the preceding sketch it is evident that Knibb was well fitted both to enjoy and to diffuse happiness in the conjugal and parental relations. "Even now," says Mrs. Knibb, in a letter to me written nearly nine months after his death, "I cannot trust myself to write much about one so dear to me. We lived happily together more than twenty-one years, and with those years our affection and esteem for each other increased. He was not unfaithful; but his kind and affectionate heart often prevented his observing anything wrong, either in myself or the children, when a less kind or a less humble person would have reproved us. Hence, as a husband and a father he was uniformly tender and gentle, and indulgent almost to a fault. He always felt much pleasure in doing anything within his power, either to gratify the wishes of his children, to alleviate their sufferings, or to enter into their amusements; and if I sometimes said I thought he was too indulgent, he would say, 'Bless their dear hearts, I like to see them happy, and only wish we had them *all* here'—referring to dear children who had died. Persons who were not intimately acquainted with his private character have several times said to me, 'I can understand almost everything Mr. Knibb does of a public nature, but I have been surprised to see him enter so deeply into the amusements of his own and other people's children; a man with such a weight of cares, and so many public duties.' My dear husband would often look at myself and the dear girls with much tenderness, and say, 'Poor things, I wonder what you would do if I were to be removed.' And when I would say, 'I believe the same kind Father who has for so many years watched over and sustained us, will still be with us,' he would reply, 'Yes, I believe he will; but you would feel the change bitterly, and I feel much when I think of it.'"

With his deportment in general society, in consequence of his repeated and lengthened visits to his native land, many persons in this country became practically familiar; and I believe I express the opinion of all when I say, that it was uniformly unassuming and inoffensive, engaging and agreeable. Of artificial polish his manners were totally destitute; but a constant flow of genuine kindness and simple-hearted cheerfulness more than supplied its place.

"Of his kindness of heart," says Mr. Saffery, "and his anxiety to heal a wound he might have unintentionally given, I have seen many delightful proofs. One remarkable case I will mention. We were supping together with a large party some years ago, at the house of a gentleman who was anxious to draw Knibb into conversation. He was extremely unwell that evening, and disinclined to talk, and he very briefly answered the various questions that were put to him. Disappointed in his efforts to draw Knibb out, this gentleman, partly in pique and partly as a stratagem, began to express a doubt whether the negro would work without the whip, and to say that he thought there was some ground for regarding the Africans as an inferior race. The effect on Knibb was instantaneous and electrical. His eye flashed, his whole countenance glowed with indignation, and the rebuke that he administered will never be forgotten by those who heard it. After the party had broken up and we had retired to our various quarters, I was informed by my host that Knibb had said something which he feared would be mistaken by the person to whom it was addressed, and that it might by him be supposed to allude to a severe calamity by which he had been afflicted. Early the next morning I hastened to inform Knibb of this, that he might, if he wished, remove so painful an impression from the mind of the individual who had offended him. He thanked me warmly, and burst into tears. A few hours afterwards I found him sitting under a gooseberry-tree in the garden of this gentleman, who was holding up a branch to Knibb while he plucked the rich ripe fruit which hung upon it. He looked at me, and that look was enough to show that he was enjoying a greater luxury, in the consciousness of having healed a wounded heart. A short time afterwards, taking my arm, and walking down another path in the garden, its owner said to me, 'What a noble fellow that is! He is as brave as a lion, and as tender as a dove.'"

The frankness of his apologies was generally appreciated by men of good sense and right feeling, and they were for the most part effectual to remove the offences which his fearless zeal occasionally created. In one instance he erroneously denounced as a slaveholder an excellent man (the late John Jones, Esq., of Liverpool), who had on the contrary, in the most noble and disinterested manner, given his slaves their freedom. Mr. Jones accepted with a most honourable readiness Knibb's acknowledgment of his mistake, and said, "I knew at the time that he believed he was correct, and I loved and respected him for his faithfulness."

"One feature in Knibb's character," continues Mr. Saffery, "and one for which he had not sufficient credit given him, was his unaffected humility. If he had not been a really humble man, as well as a really great man, his extraordinary popularity would have overset him. But who, in the very springtide of that popularity, ever saw him elated by it? There may have been—there was—exultation in the progress and success of that cause which he advocated, but I never saw in him, and I saw him often and watched him closely, the faintest sign of personal vanity. When in the year 1834, he and Burchell were frequently together on the platform, it was often remarked by myself and others, that he invariably endeavoured to keep himself as much as possible out of sight, and to keep his 'brother and companion in tribulation and in the kingdom and patience of Jesus Christ' before the public eye. With the most admirable tact and delicacy, so as not to offend his Christian feelings, he continually illustrated his statements by reference to Mr. Burchell's labours and sufferings, and very rarely did he allude to his own. I remember on one occasion I spoke just after Mr. Burchell, and apologized for the brevity of my address by saying I was to be followed by the champion of the rights of the down-trodden negro race. The announcement was received with great cheering. The chairman rose when it had subsided, and said, 'Mr. Saffery has pronounced Mr. Knibb's patent to a prouder nobility than any peer of the realm ever possessed. By that well-deserved title I introduce him to you—'The champion of the negro.'' Knibb was evidently distressed. For a few moments after he rose he was embarrassed. He prolonged his acknowledgments for the kindness with which he had been received, obviously to prepare some other topic than that on which he had intended to speak; after which, turning to the chairman, he said, 'As A champion of the negro I have no objection to be received, if any humble services I can render to the cause of emancipation may merit for me such a designation. I desire no higher earthly distinction; but, sir, if I am to understand by the term 'patent' an exclusive right, I disown it. I am not THE champion of the negro. To say nothing now of Clarkson, and Sharp, and Wilberforce, and Buxton, who prepared the way for the issue of our struggle, I have laboured less, and suffered less, for the negro race than my brother Burchell, who in his eloquent and heart-thrilling address to-night, has not done himself the justice he ought to have done.' He then proceeded to describe more fully several facts mentioned by Mr. Burchell, which the latter had avoided giving in detail, because he had been honourably connected with the events and circumstances to which they related. Many were in tears, less affected by the touching narratives which Knibb gave with extraordinary pathos and power, than by his own beautiful exhibition of fraternal love and Christian humility.

"In private his demeanour was singularly unassuming. Sought after, courted, flattered, wherever he went, he nevertheless maintained a child-like simplicity of spirit. No one ignorant of all parties, could have told on entering a room, from anything in his manners or bearing, that he was the idol of the circle. To his brethren in the ministry he uniformly showed the greatest deference. Nothing offended him more quickly than attention paid to himself at their expense. I have known instances in which he has quietly declined invitations to be the guest of the wealthy, lest brethren associated with him in his work and not included in those invitations, should feel themselves slighted. This may be attributed to his kindness of heart, but I regard it no less as a proof of his humility.

"He was passionately fond of children, who always reciprocated his love, and he used his influence with them for their highest good. I have seen him gambol with the little ones on the floor, and when he had won their hearts by his sympathy with them in their childish sports, he would place them on his knees, and kissing them he would then talk to them of the Saviour's love to children, till the unbidden tears trickled down their cheeks. So completely did he fascinate them, that they were less willing that he should cease his conversation than they had been just before to finish their play. They clung to him yet more closely, and if they were less merry, they were more happy. I believe that the fruits of righteousness which are now found in many of the young in our churches, may be traced to some heavenly seed which on such occasions he deposited in their hearts."

He was a devout companion. He never obtrusively brought religious topics into the domestic or social circle, yet he was always ready for them.

"I think it was Mr. Jay," says Mr. Saffery, "that I once heard, with great felicity, describe the devout man as like a bird, not always on the wing, but always ready to fly. This was strikingly characteristic of dear Knibb. And with him the transition was eminently natural. The slightest circumstance would produce it. Once travelling with him (we were alone in a railway carriage), a train with a large number of cattle passed us. I made a remark on the expensive nature of the Jewish sacrifices. He had been sleeping, but his face was in a moment lighted up, and he sang with great feeling and sweetness the whole of that beautiful hymn—

'Not all the blood of beasts,
On Jewish altars slain,
Could give the guilty conscience peace,
Or wash away the stain.'

On another occasion I visited in company with him and a party of friends, a druidical remain. Knibb was in high spirits. It was a beautiful day, and he seemed to have the fullest sympathy with the joyousness of creation. One moment he amused us with some playful sally, and the next he astonished us with some agile movement or bounding leap; now he would awaken the echoes by some laughter-stirring anecdote, and then he would whistle some air which his fancy or his taste suggested. On reaching the spot where the druid had performed his superstitious rites, a stone was pointed out as one on which, it was supposed, human victims were once sacrificed. Knibb gazed on it for a few moments, and then began to sing—

'There is a fountain filled with blood
Drawn from Immanuel's veins,
And sinners plunged beneath that flood
Lose all their guilty stains.'

All joined with him in singing the hymn, and all felt how well-tuned for instant praise the Saviour's love had kept his heart."

Thus amiable in general society, he was not less worthy of admiration in more intimate relations.

"As a friend," says Mr. Abbott, "I scarcely expect to look upon his like again. He may be said to have been born to soothe the hour of adversity. The holy serenity in the chamber of affliction, combined with that minuteness, simplicity, fervour, and unction in prayer for which he was distinguished, secured for him the most cordial welcome, and subjected him to extraordinary demands upon his time and strength; but he deemed no call at any hour to visit a sick friend untimely, and no sacrifice too great to be made in complying with it. He would rise at midnight, and, regardless of the state of the weather, travel twenty or thirty miles, in order to minister to the wants of his suffering fellow labourers, or to convey them for beneficial change to his own home. He not only readily lent what he could spare, but sometimes borrowed money to lend to his more necessitous brethren, knowing at the time that the probability of their being able to repay him was not very strong."

On one occasion he went much farther than this. Having visited one of his fellow labourers in alarming illness, and ministered the ordinary consolations, he said, "Brother, is there any thing that distresses you?" The apparently dying man replied, "I have no anxiety about my soul—that is safe in the hands of Christ; I can trust my wife and children to the care of God; but I fear lest the liabilities on my chapel not being met through my death, should bring dishonour on the cause." "Be at rest, my brother," said Knibb, "I will take them on myself." They exceeded £2,000, and his own liabilities were at the same time pressing heavily upon him.

As a preacher Knibb was not extensively known in England. He shrank in some degree from engagements of this class, and evidently preferred the platform to the pulpit. He used to say, "I work so hard all the week, that you must let me have my sabbaths to myself." The impression in this country, I believe, is that preaching was not his forte, and that the sustained consecutive thought which it requires was not easy to him.

On this subject Mr. Abbott says, "His addresses from the platform were usually more animated, striking, and eloquent, than those from the pulpit; still he was one of the most acceptable and useful of preachers. His discourses at home were for the most part beautifully simple and affectionate; at the Lord's table they were peculiarly solemn and impressive." The following fact in illustration is furnished to me by Mr. Dexter. When about to preach an anniversary sermon at New Birmingham, seeing that many persons had assembled at an early hour, he said, "Come, let us have family prayer with them in the chapel." Sitting at the table beneath the pulpit, he read the 15th chapter of Luke, and then for about an hour, talked to the people from the middle clause of the second verse, "This man receiveth sinners." "Never shall I forget," says Mr. Dexter, "how the plain, but pure language seemed to gush from his inmost soul, or how his feelings seemed to spread from heart to heart, till all present were bathed in tears."

In November, 1839, while he was preaching at Stewart Town, there occurred two shocks of an earthquake, filling the congregation with dismay; he continued his discourse, however, and noticed the occurrence no otherwise than by a devout thanksgiving at the close, for the deliverance which had been vouchsafed to them. The fact is regarded by the correspondent who supplies it to me as an evidence of the absorption of his mind in his subject; but it would be quite as much in harmony with his constitutional elements to refer it to his natural fearlessness. That his ministerial feelings, however, were very solemn there can be no doubt. On the blank leaf of his copy of Baxter's *Reformed Pastor*, I find the following words in his hand-writing—"The reading of this book has often made me pray and tremble."

As a pastor, he was zealous, faithful, and eminently kind. In the point last named a peculiarity seems to have attached to him, resolvable perhaps, rather into constitutional than voluntary causes. "It is melancholy," says Mrs. Knibb, "to hear our poor people say, 'Oh, we have no friend now in Jamaica. The other ministers kind, but none can do like Massa Knibb.' And the missionaries often say things of similar purport." The missionaries assuredly do not mean to be less kind than their departed brother; and the language used can show only this, that there was in Knibb's constitutional temperament a pre-eminent adaptation to the sensitive and affectionate people among whom he laboured. It is needless to record that such a pastor was "greatly beloved."

He was far from confining his sympathies, however, within the circle of his flock. He surveyed the spiritual necessities of Jamaica on a large scale, and laboured for the widest possible extension of the mission. In this department of labour Mr. Abbott states him to have been still better qualified, than for "the quiet plodding of the country pastor," and in it certainly he had no ordinary share of success.

Of the character and results of Knibb's missionary labours, I know of no reason why I should speak in terms of faint or hesitating praise. His sincere and ardent devotedness to the work of God admits of no doubt. His general spirit of self-sacrifice is equally unquestionable. It is true that the numbers he baptized were very large; but I cannot on this account cast any shade on his unfeigned love for the truth of the gospel, or his anxious desire for the purity of the churches. I do not believe that he ever admitted a member for the sake of numerical increase. I believe him rather to have uniformly acted out his own declaration—" I never received any but those whom I dared not refuse." As for the unbelief which has rendered some persons incredulous of such numerous conversions, and the unscriptural strictness which would have led others to refuse to professed converts so early a Christian recognition, I can only say that I have no sympathy with them. I see nothing particularly praiseworthy in limiting the Holy One of Israel on the one hand, or in departing from apostolical example on the other. Of the actual condition of the churches under his care, I can, of course, express no positive opinion, but I confess that I think favourably of it. I have yet to learn, and I have not been an inattentive observer of what has passed in relation to this subject, that imperfections of any other kind have been found among them than such as naturally attach to persons converted in their circumstances, or of any larger amount than may fairly be deemed proportionate to their unusual numbers. I am satisfied that Knibb did all he could for their edification. That many of them may have learned little beyond the way to heaven is sufficiently probable; but it is matter of boundless rejoicing if, through the grace of God, they did learn the way to heaven; and it is a fact most honourable to Knibb himself, that with all that might have rendered the exercise of Christian affection difficult, he was so ardently attached to them.

In the course of his ministry, Knibb has been stated to have baptized from five to six thousand persons. It was his principle, and I think it is one highly to be commended, never to suffer the church under his care to become very large. He much preferred the formation of new churches in suitable neighbourhoods.

Acting on this plan, his church at Falmouth underwent an amicable division no less than six times, several hundred members being dismissed on each occasion; and when he saw the chapel partially empty, he said cheerfully, "We must work hard, and fill it again." In this system there is apparent an admirable willingness to reduce his personal influence, for the sake of extending the cause of Christ.

As a missionary among missionary brethren Knibb held a distinguished place. His ardent desire for the extension of the mission, the fertility of his mind in the suggestion of expedients, and his power of persuasive advocacy, rendered him both prominent and influential. Although often having to contend with differences of opinion, and these sometimes strongly held, he seldom failed to engage a sufficient amount of concurrence to secure the adoption of his plans. On some occasions he deemed it right to pursue a course involving the censure of some of his brethren, but this, although necessarily creating temporary irritation, never alienated a brother from him, or diminished the confidence universally cherished in his integrity and good intentions. Whenever a difficult step was to be taken, or a responsible and critical duty to be discharged, Knibb was invariably called to it by the unanimous voice; and this fact is not more a tribute to his acknowledged sagacity and talent for business, than a testimony of the unabated respect and confidence with which he was regarded. Never did such confidence meet with a more faithful or more generous return.

It would have been inconsistent with so kind and generous a nature as Knibb's, if he had not been characterized by hospitality. He was, however, in this respect, everything that could have been expected from him. His house was open to all, and especially to all missionaries, of whatever denomination. Whether for their convenience on newly arriving in the island, for their recovery from debilitating sickness, or for the transaction of important affairs, many of his brethren have been for considerable periods his guests. His house might almost have been called a hospital or an hotel, but that it was for every inmate of it a home.

His intercourse with missionaries of other denominations does not appear to have been extensive. Two causes by which it must have been restricted are apparent on the face of his history. The one is the attitude of censoriousness assumed by so many of them in relation to the purity of the baptist churches; the second, the want of sympathy which they universally manifested in his efforts for the overthrow of slavery. It cannot be doubted, however, that he cherished in the largest sense the love of the brethren. I have indeed a pleasing evidence of it, in a letter which he addressed to the widow of a missionary employed by the London Missionary Society, on the decease of her husband. It breathes so sweet a spirit that I shall insert it entire.

"*Falmouth, April* 23, 1839.

"My dear Friend,—I hope that I shall not be deemed premature in thus obtruding upon the deep distress in which you must be plunged, by the sudden removal of your beloved husband to the realms of immortality. Most deeply do we sympathize with you under this painful bereavement, and most fervently would we desire that the God of all comfort may abundantly pour into your distressed and afflicted mind the balm of consolation. He, and he alone, is able to do this, and, blessed be his name, he is as willing as he is able. To Him the widow and the fatherless can flee, and in him they are sure to find a kind and sympathizing friend.

"Thus has it pleased the great Head of the church to weaken the hands of his faithful servants, and to remove from a scene of usefulness one who was well qualified to carry on that important sphere of missionary labour to which he had devoted his life. Thus it is we are taught our nothingness, and how easily our fond desires, even for the extension of truth and holiness, may wither by the hand of death. May God in his infinite mercy sanctify this dispensation to us all, and teach us ever to be ready to meet the final struggle by which we shall be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.

"It has pleased the Disposer of all events secularly to afflict us as he has that mission in which your beloved husband laboured. Mr. Andrews, our teacher at Montego Bay, sleeps in death, together with his only child. Oh! it is a dying world. Happy, happy they whose hopes are fixed in heaven!

"Mrs. Knibb desires me to express her affectionate sympathy for you, and to assure you how sincerely she feels for you under this heavy bereavement.

"Commending you, and your fatherless babes, to His care who has all power to relieve and sustain,

"I am,
"Yours very affectionately,
"WILLIAM KNIBB.

"To MRS. RUSSELL."

A similar letter was written by him to Mr. Ellis, as secretary to the London Missionary Society, on the death of their lamented missionary, Williams; and this letter also, if any trace of it could have been found, I should with pleasure have inserted, as a further illustration of the catholicity of his spirit.

Whether, in ordinary circumstances, Knibb would have paid much regard to the temporal welfare of those among whom he laboured, or whether he would have laid it down as a universal rule that missionaries ought to do so, it may be difficult to decide. It is enough to say that the circumstances in which he was actually placed justified the course he took, and that by means of them Divine Providence opened to him a course of lofty virtue and distinguished usefulness, which it was his wisdom to discern, and his honour to accomplish.

If it is asked how far the anti-slavery cause was advanced by his efforts, and what contribution he may be deemed to have made to its ultimate success, my answer will be couched in no extravagant terms. Without thinking that my estimate on this point will materially differ from the deliberate opinion of his most partial friends, I must say at once that I am not about to call him, as some have done, THE liberator of the slave. I do not notice this expression to condemn it. Under the excitement which gave birth to it such an exaggeration is sufficiently excusable. I cannot, however, allow myself to write in a similar strain. The excitement is past now, and I am writing for history. It surely must not be forgotten, that the subject of British colonial slavery had been before the public for nearly fifty years before the Jamaica revolt of 1831, that it had engaged the devoted labours of some of the ablest and the noblest men the world ever knew—Sharp, Clarkson, Wilberforce, Macaulay, and Buxton, are immortal names—and that by their endeavours, much had already been done towards effecting its extinction at the period when Knibb appeared on the field. He entered at once into the labours of others, and possessed without a struggle the advantages which they had fought hard to obtain. He also found himself immediately in the midst of a band of powerful and strenuous fellow labourers, who, gladly availing themselves of his accession, gave augmented power to his appeals. It would be unjust, therefore, to claim for Knibb personally, or even for the insurrection in Jamaica as a whole, the abolition of colonial slavery. Nor is it necessary. It is enough to say that that insurrection was the drop which filled to overflowing the cup of colonial iniquity, and that it added to the phalanx arrayed against colonial slavery a combatant without whose aid it could not at that time have been overthrown. It is enough for the most jealous friends of the fame of Knibb to affirm that his exertions in the anti-slavery cause have given him a place in its history, and have so closely linked him with its most celebrated advocates, that when their names are mentioned, his cannot without injustice be forgotten.

It may be added, however, that in his share of the anti-slavery struggle, Knibb to a great extent stood alone. The battle he fought was a kind of episode to the more general war. In England he was by his circumstances directly pitted against the West India body, who fell upon him with their whole strength, and wreaked on him their bitterest vengeance. Against no other individual did they ever wage such exterminating war. Nor was there any one to aid him in his defence against their assault. In the presence of two armies his safety was put to the issue of single combat, and he conquered. He was nearly as solitary in the conflict he sustained in Jamaica, as he was in England. No missionaries but those of the Baptist Missionary Society ever took the part of the slave, and not all of these. In the perils of the insurrection the baptist missionaries generally were involved, and ultimately several of his brethren fully sympathized with him; but none took so active a part, none made themselves so obnoxious to colonial revenge. Practically he stood alone, and he needed for his support all the firmness and constancy of his character. So far as Jamaica is concerned, consequently, the blacks may well be excused for reckoning him the father of freedom. No one had they seen struggle and suffer for it as he had done. It is not possible that in that island, freedom should ever be so intimately or so passionately associated with the name of any man, as with that of William Knibb.

Knibb commenced his career altogether without pretension. No adventitious honours attached to him. He inherited no name. He came forth from obscurity, and from the common dwelling-places of mankind. All that could be said of him in his youth was that he was a well-behaved apprentice, and like other pious young men, desirous of being useful. He had no academical advantages. He was employed by the Baptist Missionary Society in the capacity of a school-master and assistant preacher, and without any other preparation than three months at the normal institution of the British and Foreign School Society. As a school-master he was successful. He was successful also as a preacher; but nothing more than the ordinary eulogy conferred on faithful servants was earned by him in the first seven years of his labours. His greatness began with the insurrection. In the face of men who were loading him with calumnies and thirsting for his blood, he assumed an attitude of moral heroism nothing less than sublime. His return for their personal rancour was the noble and benevolent resolution to uproot the system out of which it grew. With this object once before him, the full exercise of all his powers was challenged and indispensable. The obstacles which impeded his course were formidable and various. They were the grave reluctance of a body so influential as the committee of the Baptist Missionary Society; the uncertain sensibility of public auditories, as yet untried by similar appeals; and although last not least, the then unbroken power of the West India body, both in the country and with the government. To overcome these obstacles demanded qualities of the highest order; immovable firmness of purpose, inexhaustible mental and physical energy, and a power over the hearts of men almost preter-natural. Knibb displayed all these qualities, and proved himself equal to every emergency. In the conduct of the anti-slavery controversy he occupied a considerable space in the public eye, and rose to an altitude which would have made most men look small; but he, like a colossal statue, at once demanded and adorned it.

It has been said, I believe, by some persons, that circumstances made Knibb what he became; but I cannot concur in this opinion. While on the one hand, it is false philosophy to say that circumstances create qualities, it is, I think, manifest that many men might have been placed in the same circumstances, and have become very different characters. In fact, there were through the whole period a considerable number of missionaries in Jamaica, but there was only one Knibb.

While circumstances did not make his character, however, they afforded him the opportunity of developing it. They constituted the pedestal on which time has placed the statue. And circumstances can scarcely be conceived better fitted to bring his qualities into play. His combined sentiment of generosity and justice was strongly appealed to by the condition of the slaves, and he became at once their devoted friend. From the first he did for them all that his position allowed; and when after the insurrection, the abolition of slavery became his object, his characteristic qualities became wonderfully conspicuous.

A remarkable feature of Knibb's public life consisted in the great vicissitudes through which he passed.

Having encountered in the first instance the most virulent form of malignant hostility, he was rapidly elevated to the pinnacle of popular applause. At one moment expecting to be shot as a traitor to his country, at another he was revered as a public benefactor. He endured both extremes; and it is not too much to say that he endured them both well. As hostility neither inspired fear nor kindled resentment, so applause produced no manifestations of pride or ostentation. When most idolized he did not lose, either the native simplicity of his manner, or the genuine humility of his spirit. He never affected the great man, or assumed airs of superiority over his brethren. Evident as on many occasions it was, that there was some individual to whom all eyes and thoughts were directed, no one could have discovered by his manner that it was himself. That he assumed so little, made every one willing to render more, and never, I believe, was admiration more freely bestowed. No one seemed constrained to say, "We must restrain ourselves; he is becoming vain."*

---

* At too late an hour to incorporate its contents with the narrative, I have received a paper consisting of extracts from the journal of Mr. Lewis Lewis, some time a methodist missionary in Jamaica, and during that period in occasional intercourse with Knibb. Unable to reconcile myself to the entire omission of the graphic sketches it contains, I insert it here as a note:—

Extracts from the Journal of Mr. Lewis Lewis.

"1838. March. Had a ride with that great philanthropist, William Knibb, who expressed towards me, as a young missionary, the most benignant and generous sentiments. I was seated on an ill-looking, worn-out pony, which had fallen with me the day before. 'You must have a better horse, Mr. Lewis,' said he; 'a missionary's life in Jamaica is not to be sacrificed to save a few macs (macaronies).'

"April. Had an interview with Mr. Knibb at Mr. Abbott's. I now saw the intensity of his affection for the negro population. He expressed himself most eloquently and plaintively on the subject of their sufferings under some of the stipes (special magistrates); and then, with a look I shall never forget, he said, 'It cannot go on—they must be free in August.' With an eye of fire he added, 'Lewis, we must have a bell. We must toll out the dismal night.

Few men have been charged with more heinous faults; but his accusers were found exclusively in the colonial party, whose hostility was the mere recoil of

The monster shall have funeral rites.' I looked at him as he sat in his shirt sleeves, with a Panama hat on, with admiration, and said secretly, 'What a moral Hercules!'

"July 13. Dined at the Rev. T. Abbott's, with the Rev. Messrs. Knibb, Dexter, Clark, and Williams. The act granting unqualified emancipation has now passed, and all will be free on the 1st of August. It was deemed prudent to call the blacks together, and address them. Mr. Knibb to-day was a good specimen of an ardent and intelligent philanthropist. His speech was an unaffected and sublime exposition of the past, the present, and the future, as regards the Africans in Jamaica. Having described in his own way the horrors of Jamaica slavery, a foolish man got up, and asked, 'Where did these things occur?' 'Where?' retorted Knibb. 'Has any man the audacity to ask me where? I answer, on the ground on which we stand. Yes, where this chapel is built have these things been perpetrated.' Only those who were present can form an idea of the intense feeling excited. One general shout filled the spacious edifice. To the brethren privately Mr. K. entered into many particulars as to the way in which he intended to spend the jubilee. 'I will not wear a single thing that I have worn before,' said he. 'I cannot say that I ever had all my outfit new together; but I will now, even to a pair of gaiters.'

"1839. September. I am through mercy recovered from severe illness. I have received several kind letters, one from that great man, William Knibb. It is just like him to sympathize with pain and affliction, wherever existent.

"October 14. The following are extracts of a second letter from Mr. Knibb.

"'My dear Brother,—I was much pleased to receive a letter from you, as it tells me you are in the land of the living, and gives me an opportunity of writing a few lines. It matters little to me whether you are a methodist or a baptist. You love Jesus; I love him; and we shall meet in heaven. There, my brother, we shall see eye to eye; now we feel heart to heart, an earnest of the more perfect light. . . . But how is it that the sound of our *Herald* has not reached you? Why, my brother, I have actually established a newspaper, at a dollar a year, and of course you will take it. . . The baptists of New York have opened a correspondence with us on downright anti-slavery principles. A convocation of baptists in America is about to be held for immediate emancipation, and I hope in a few months to be firing away in New York, a tremendous broadside against the infernal monster. . . Well my brother, Jesus must reign, slavery must fall, ecclesiastical tyranny must die. I have to preach on Christian patriotism next union.'

"1840. March 8. To-day, while standing with a friend in Kingston-street, I heard a *quondam* editor shouting, 'There goes Satan;' and on looking with some excitement, I recognized my friend Knibb, driven by Mr. Oughton. I hastened to the mission-house, where I found him. The subjects discussed were the demoralized state of Hayti, and the probable abuse of freedom in Jamaica. I shall never forget his defence of our black brethren.

his consecration to the cause of the slave, and whose vituperation constitutes a part of his most genuine eulogy. Many of this class of persons lived to regret and to abandon their hatred, and none now believe the calumnies formerly circulated against him. His setting has been glorious enough to tinge with brightness the clouds which partially overcast his noon. The sectarian animosity which grieved him for a time has, I am happy to believe, wholly disappeared.

He had, however, his faults, although not those which his enemies ascribed to him. Of course, occasionally his vehemence merged into impatience, his zeal was marred by indiscretion, and his indignation approximated to resentment; yet these were not so much faults as infirmities of virtue. To have been constitutionally what he was and to have had no love of power, or to have been magnified as he was both by hostility and applauses and to have had no egotism, would have made him superhuman. I will add my conviction, however, that while he manifested much less of these faults than might have been anticipated

"March 19. Breakfasted with Mr. K. at the Mico Institution. The subject argued was the necessary corruption of a state church. Put away this toryism, Lewis,' said Mr. K., as I endeavoured to controvert his arguments. 'Binney's ground is tenable. The church of England destroys more souls than it saves.' Finding I would not assent, he said, with his own benignant smile, 'Well, we may agree to differ.'

"1841. February. Being unhappy at the increasing disunion existing between certain brethren, I entreated Mr. K. to try and put an end to an unseemly newspaper war. The following is an extract from his answer :—

"'Deeply do I regret the disunion exhibited to the world by the ministers of Jesus Christ in this island. Gladly would I associate with all my brethren who are the faithful ministers of the cross; but by many I am shunned. The bugbear 'political' represents me in such odious colours to them, that they appear to be concerned only that the world may know that they have no dealings with me. Well, this I cannot help; being convinced that it is my duty to protect the oppressed in every form and manner that the constitution allows. And I bless God that he will make use of my feeble agency to relieve the woes of man.'"

from the frailty of human nature, under the influence of divine grace he lamented and mortified them, together with those numerous other evils which every one who knows his own heart detects, although his fellow men charge them upon him.

To the preceding sketch I have great pleasure in annexing a brief but gratifying testimony, from a gentleman of distinguished piety and philanthropy, and wholly unconnected with Knibb by either secular or religious ties. It is borne by the late Joseph John Gurney, Esq., whose recent and lamented death is both a private and a public loss of no ordinary magnitude, and is contained in a note addressed by him to Mr. Saffery, dated Earlham, January 6, 1846. It is as follows:—

> "I had much satisfaction when in Jamaica nearly five years ago, in visiting Falmouth, the scene of our lamented friend William Knibb's zealous and indefatigable labours.
>
> "My stay there was very short, but I was most kindly received and lodged at William Knibb's house; and an opportunity was willingly given to my friend John Candler and myself of meeting many hundreds of the emancipated labourers of the district, in the large and commodious chapel in which he was accustomed to officiate.
>
> "The very orderly appearance of the people, and the willing attention with which they listened to us, afforded a striking evidence that the Christian care of a friend who was then absent had been greatly blessed to them. Their attention was the more grateful to us, because the advice which we were led to give them was of a very plain practical character, relating to industry in the cultivation of the soil, the education of their children, the daily use of the holy scriptures, the duty of mothers, &c.
>
> "In the house of correction, which had been formerly crowded with offenders, we found only one prisoner—a white sailor. I have no doubt that this remarkable diminution of crime and the happy improvement which had taken place in the moral, social, and religious condition of the labouring class, was owing to a considerable extent, and under divine grace, to the Christian care and influence

of William Knibb, especially in the highly important department of popular education.

"Bold and unflinching as he had so long been in the cause of freedom, and like other advocates of that cause, spoken against by many, I had every reason to believe that he was as good a friend to the planter as to the emancipated children of Africa; for his faithful instructions were the means of the improvement of the latter as servants and labourers, as well as in other respects.

"Long will our deceased friend be remembered with respect and love, as one of the firmest supporters of the anti-slavery cause, at a time when that support was given at the price of great persecution, and even at the imminent risk of life itself."

To this letter I add with equal gratification the testimony borne by Mr. Freeman, secretary of the London Missionary Society, who also had seen Knibb in Jamaica. It is taken from his speech at the annual meeting of the Baptist Missionary Society, in 1846:—

"William Knibb was a man of incalculable energy, and almost superhuman devotedness. Almost? It was entirely superhuman; it was not in his own strength, but in the power of the Lord of hosts that he prosecuted his work. He lived to impress a character on the age in which he lived, and I am convinced that the name of William Knibb will not soon cease to be reverenced and loved by thousands in Jamaica. My own visit to him in that island is one of the most pleasing recollections of my life. On my arrival he gave me a fraternal welcome, and an invitation to come and see him; and if you ask me what I went to see, I reply, it was not 'a reed shaken with the wind,' it was not a person 'clothed in soft raiment.' William Knibb was not a man of feeble luxury, or of vacillating spirit, but a man of firmness, of energy, of largeness of heart. Yet did not these qualities destroy an atom of his susceptibility. There was an air of kindness and tenderness about all that he said and did. He had a noble soul, full of great thoughts and great feelings, enshrined in a manly and noble form, and the grace of God was in everything manifest. Since I first knew the man I have never wondered at the extent of his influence over the negro population. His characteristics were just those which are fitted to secure the affection and confidence of the race. He was a man of decision, and they loved it; a man of energy, and they felt that they could lean upon it; a man of blandness and candour, and those qualities secured the affections of their hearts."

If there is one reflection which, more than others, presses itself on my mind in concluding this sketch, it is this:—Of how few and of what simple elements may an eminently useful character be formed! Knibb is now regarded as one of the great men of his age. But what was he? Let the reader invert this question, and ask how many things he *was not.* He was not a man of original genius. He was not a man of lofty intellect. He was not a man of literary taste. He was not a man of finished education. He was not a man of scientific attainments. He was not a metaphysician, not a philosopher, not a poet, not even a theologian. So many things that he was not, again I ask, what *was* he? He was kind, just, firm, active, and fearless. He had good sense, strong nerves, simple speech, a warm heart, and lively piety. What commonplace qualities are these! Yet they made an extraordinary man. They made a man who, by active sympathy with its griefs, has left a world better than he found it; while too often men of genius and profundity, soaring listlessly above it, have after a passing look of pity or contempt, left it as it was. The latter may perhaps be compared to meteors, which beautify the night; while Knibb, and the class to which he belongs, may be said to resemble the sun, which cheers and animates the day. Happily for our race, for one who possesses the loftier qualities there are a thousand who possess the more useful; and the example of Knibb will have been exhibited in vain, if it do not at once suggest and encourage imitation.

To God, the giver of all good, be the glory of what he was, and of what he accomplished!

J. HADDON, PRINTER, CASTLE STREET, FINSBURY.

1363 TC MS 211 LBC

Princeton Theological Seminary-Speer Library

1 1012 01075 5298

DATE DUE

~~APR 1 4 2005~~		
~~MAY 0 3 2005~~		

GAYLORD #3523PI Printed in USA